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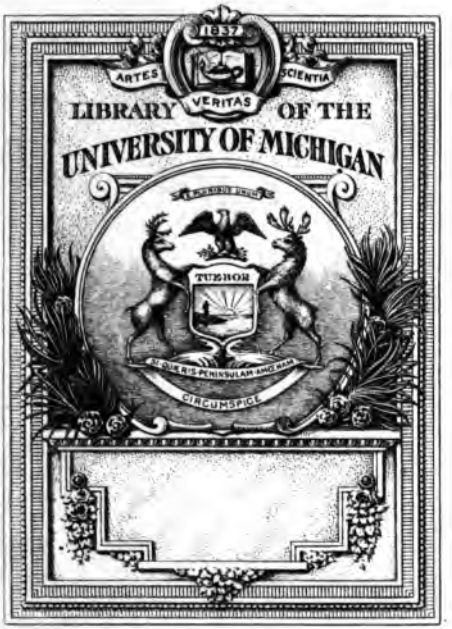
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FROM KITCHEN TO GARRET

BY

VIRGINIA TERHUNE VAN DE WATER

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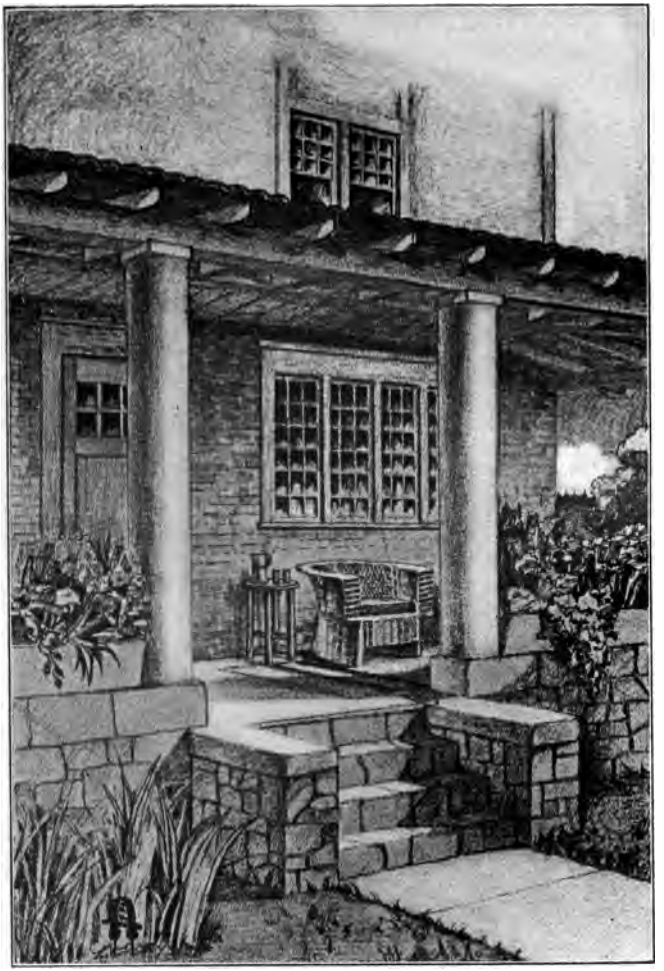

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ENTRANCE PORCH

FROM
KITCHEN TO GARRET

BY

VIRGINIA TERHUNE VAN DE WATER
AUTHOR OF "THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE COMMUTER AND HIS WIFE," ETC., ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

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1912

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TO MY MOTHER,

MARION HARLAND,

WHO, BY PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE,

HAS TAUGHT ME ALL THAT I KNOW OF

HOUSEKEEPING AND HOME-MAKING,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS

DEDICATED

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INTRODUCTION

BY THE GENERAL EDITOR

This is the day of the small book. There is much to be done. Time is short. Information is earnestly desired, but it is wanted in compact form, confined directly to the subject in view, authenticated by real knowledge, and, withal, gracefully delivered. It is to fulfill these conditions that the present series has been projected—to lend real assistance to those who are looking about for new tools and fresh ideas.

It is addressed especially to the man and woman at a distance from the libraries, exhibitions, and daily notes of progress, which are the main advantage, to a studious mind, of living in or near a large city. The editor has had in view, especially, the farmer and villager who is striving to make the life of himself and his family broader and brighter, as well as to increase his bank account; and it is therefore in the humane, rather than in a commercial direction, that the Library has been planned.

The average American little needs advice on the conduct of his farm or business; or, if he thinks he does, a large supply of such help in farming and trading as books and periodicals can give, is available to him. But many a man who is well to do and knows how to continue to make money, is ignorant how to spend it in a way to bring to himself, and confer upon his wife and children, those conveniences, comforts and niceties which alone make money worth acquiring and life worth living. He hardly realizes that they are within his reach.

For suggestion and guidance in this direction there is a real call, to which this series is an answer. It proposes to tell its readers how they can make work easier, health more secure, and the home more enjoyable and tenacious of the whole family. No evil in American rural life is so great as the tendency of the young people to leave the farm and the village. The cnly way to overcome this evil is to make rural life less hard and sordid; more comfortable and attractive. It is to the solving of that problem that these books are addressed. Their central idea is to show how country life may be made

richer in interest, broader in its activities and its outlook, and sweeter to the taste.

To this end men and women who have given each a lifetime of study and thought to his or her speciality, will contribute to the Library, and it is safe to promise that each volume will join with its eminently practical information a still more valuable stimulation of thought.

ERNEST INGERSOLL.

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FROM KITCHEN TO GARRET.

FROM KITCHEN TO GARRET

CHAPTER I

A HEART-TO-HEART TALK WITH THE HOUSEWIFE

BEFORE starting upon our tour of the house, beginning with kitchen and cellar, and proceeding through other rooms on our trip of inspection and of suggestion, I want to have a little informal chat with my reader and try to make her appreciate how deeply I am interested in the work that is hers. I want her also to know that I consider her calling (for we may give it that name as justly as if it were a learned profession) one of the most important in the world. People may sneer at the work of the house as if it counted for little. I do not think that I exaggerate when I claim that the health, the happiness, and, often, the very morals of the family, depend on the way that the house in which they are lodged and fed is conducted.

The house-mother herself makes a sad error when she speaks of her duties as "ignoble tasks." There are few nobler. Next to the care of her children should come the care of her home, and proper attention to the one involves intelligent care of the other. To her has been committed the responsibility of what may be in the fullest sense of the beautiful word a *home*,—not simply a place where people eat and sleep.

To fulfill her calling properly, she must have system in everything. This is essential if she would avoid the hustle and bustle that men hate and children dread. A place for each article and every article in its place; a time for everything, and everything done on time, is a state of affairs for which she should work and plan, but not to the exclusion of all other considerations. She should manage her system, not allow the system to manage her. If each duty does not dovetail with the next it is not a domestic tragedy, although some women regard it as such.

And right here is where I want to put up a danger-signal for my sisters. The woman who

cares for her house too often allows herself to look so long at the duties that she does not see what they stand for. They should mean neatness, to be sure, but they must also mean peace, comfort, homelikeness,—and when the spirit of fretfulness and irritability enters in the duties become degrading. Then, and only then, is housework ignoble. Otherwise it is as important and as ennobling as the work that takes the physician on his round of duties or keeps the trained nurse faithful to her patient. I wish I could make all women feel this, or, as they say up in New England, "sense" the deep significance of her home tasks. But she should always be their mistress, and not become their slave.

Some of my readers may smile and wonder how one can avoid the condition of affairs about which I utter this foreword of warning. There are many ways.

First of all, as I have intimated, is System. Duties done in any way, at any time, are never well done, and seldom are cleared up and out of the way. I once had a maid who worked all the time, and hard, and yet I was puzzled that,

although she was weary when night came on, her work was never entirely finished. One day I watched her to see what the trouble was. First she began to clear away the breakfast dishes. Before half of them were removed she remembered that the fire in the kitchen was low and ran out to add more fuel to it. As she reached the range she noticed that it was dull, and decided that now that the stove was cool she would polish it. This she proceeded to do, then, starting for a scuttle of coal, she saw the milk, which had not been put away as soon as it came, standing on the pantry table. Setting down the scuttle, she stopped to pour the milk into pans, and, by that time, she recalled the fact that the dining-room table was not yet cleared, and ran off to carry out the rest of the dishes. When she had done this the range fire was out and had to be rebuilt.

And so matters went from hour to hour. I had discovered what the trouble was. She had never learned System. To do thoroughly each duty in the time allotted for it is to simplify work. Had the milk been put away as soon as it was brought into the house, that bit of work

would have been out of the way. Had the stove been polished before the fire was built, it would have been shining bright at a later hour, and, when the coal scuttle was emptied, had it been refilled, there would have been no necessity for stopping the clearing away of the dishes to run to the cellar for fuel.

Another way to avoid the tyranny of housework is not to attempt too elaborate a schedule. By this I mean do not attempt to seem to live beyond your means. There lies a pitfall to the American householder. What has been called "even-threaded living" should be striven after. Do not have plain fare six days in the week and "put the big pot in the little one" on the seventh day when you expect company. Have for the family such good food that your friends may always find you at your best.

"But," protests some woman whose purse is emaciated, "my means will not allow me to live everyday as I want to live when I have company."

To which I reply, without hesitation,—"What is good enough for your husband and children is good enough for your guests."

It was once my good fortune to make a little visit in a farmhouse where the family "lived plainly." I wish now that I might repeat the experience. Breakfast in the morning consisted of good buckwheat cakes and delicious coffee,—for the weather was bitter cold. At noon, a nourishing broth, with an abundance of light bread and sweet butter, followed by a substantial dessert and coffee would be set before us one day; the next, the dinner might consist of meat and two vegetables, and coffee. But the suppers were my delight, and yet they were often but a bowl of smoking hot mush with a glass of milk and a pitcher of cream, and tea, or coffee, and cake. Plain? Yes, but so daintily served, so perfectly prepared, that the city-dweller thanked the kind fortune which had made it possible for her to visit in a home where she was fed as if she were "one of the family."

If your income will not allow you to live in any but the plainest way, do not be ashamed of it, but have the food that you can afford as well cooked and served as possible, and then set it before your friends with the cordial welcome that is the perfect sauce. Pretense is

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PORCH

always ridiculous; honest simplicity is always admirable. If there are people who would despise your manner of living, your home is too sacred for you to receive them there.

But lack of means does not mean lack of dainty appointments. In this day of cheap chinas there is little excuse for ugly, cumbersome dishes, for prettily decorated ware can be bought at little expense. The same is true of many of the other housekeeping appointments upon which we will talk later. If linen cannot be fine, it may be well washed and ironed; if one cannot have costly rugs, those made of home-sewed rag-carpeting may be in good colors, and well shaken and brushed. Do not be afraid of the graceful pretty touches in your household. A plant of blooming geranium will give elegance to the plainest table.

Above all else, remember what the Apostle Paul says about magnifying his office, and magnify yours! You cannot fail to do this when you pause to appreciate that you are the captain of the craft, and that the entire crew look to you for guidance, for food, for rest, and for the mothering that makes of a house a HOME.

CHAPTER II

THE KITCHEN

THE kitchen may well be called the heart of the home, as from it go the streams of life that sustain the various members of the family.

The women of generations back spent much of their time in their kitchens. In this day we may marvel at this fact, but if one has once seen the huge kitchen of an old New England homestead the wonder vanishes. As a child I was permitted a glimpse at such a room, for up in the Massachusetts mountains the owner of this old farm held to the traditions of her grandparents. The room had four windows, the sills of which were lined with blooming plants. The hard floor was painted a light yellow, and there was not a speck of dust to be seen upon it. Rockers and a settee added to the comfortable appearance of the apartment, while on the walls hung copper and tin utensils

shining as if they were new. Old blue china, that would have filled a collector's heart with envy, graced the shelves. Here the farmer and his wife ate their meals, and, at night, after supper, the husband sat at the fireside and smoked his pipe while his better half "cleared up." This task accomplished she drew her rocker to the side of the table on which rested the lamp and took up her knitting.

In these days we have changed all that sort of thing, and the kitchen is the room in which the cooking is done, and in which the pots and pans are washed. In many ways the modern plan is an improvement on the old, for now when crullers and doughnuts, or griddle cakes and sausage, are fried, the garments of the entire family do not reek with the odor of cold grease for the next three days.

But the kitchen should still be cheerful. To this end have the walls of a light color, and painted. They can then be scrubbed as easily as if they were marble or stone. A pale yellow is a satisfactory finish, as it always looks clean, and does not fade as do blues and greens.

The subject of the kitchen floor is one that

has been much discussed, as housewives differ as to the best way to treat it. Some hold that painted boards are entirely satisfactory, while others claim, justly, that they cannot be thoroughly cleansed without a great deal of effort. I think these last contestants are right, for, unless a board is of hard wood, grease will soak into it, it will occasionally splinter off, and there are sure to be cracks in which dirt accumulates. Mopping will not remove this dirt; one must attack it on one's knees with a scrubbing-brush, a task from which one often rises with an ugly splinter under the finger-nail or imbedded in the flesh.

So, when possible, cover the kitchen floor with linoleum. Since this is not a cheap article get an excellent quality while you are buying it. It is better to pay a good price in the beginning than to have to renew the covering within two years' time. Do not tack the linoleum down, unless there are certain corners which are in such a position that they will get turned up. In that case, put a single tack in each of these vulnerable points. The linoleum is so heavy that it will lie flat without nailing,

and can then be taken up when the housecleaning time comes, and the floor beneath it can be thoroughly cleansed.

Of course, if one feels one cannot afford linoleum, one must choose between oilcloth and paint. I should advocate the latter. I acknowledge that it is a nuisance to have the paint renewed each Spring, but, on the other hand, oilcloth wears through in unsightly holes, and when it becomes shabby is very shabby indeed. If you must have paint, have a carpenter plane off the rough boards, getting them as smooth as possible. Then paint the floor. For this purpose the same light yellow I suggested for the walls is good. Make some arrangement by which the paint may not be trodden on until entirely dry. I emphasize this bit of advice, having seen too often a floor which was walked on before it was quite dry, and on which there were always afterward marks which looked like dirt, but could not be scrubbed off. Let the family reconcile itself to dispense with much cooking while the floor is wet, and have only one person do the work at the range, etc. Lay boards from doors to range and sink until the

paint is so hard that there is not the least feeling of stickiness about it. Even then it is well to allow a day longer than seems necessary to make assurance doubly sure.

When the floor is once in good condition keep it so, and insist that others do the same. There is no more reason why muddy boots should be allowed in the kitchen than in the parlors or bedrooms. Have a large door mat outside of the kitchen door, just as you do at the front door, and provide the step with an old-fashioned iron scraper with which the rough mud may be removed before the mat is used. This is one of the little ways of keeping a house clean that many housekeepers disregard.

Have rugs for your kitchen. These may be simply strips of carpet, bound at each end. Not only will they protect the floor, but they make standing easier for the worker. Try standing for ten minutes on a bare board instead of upon a piece of carpet and you will see the force of my argument. Have a strip of carpet, or a home-made rag-rug in front of the range, another by the sink, and a third in front of the

table at which mixing and rolling-out are done. It is right and proper that these bits of carpeting should be of cheap material, for when they wear into holes they must be renewed. Meanwhile they may be cleaned, when soiled by bits of grease in which the dust has settled. To clean them dip a brush in hot ammonia-and-water, rub soap on it, and scrub the rugs as you would a board. When thoroughly wet, and well-soaked with the lather and ammonia-water, throw them into the tub, cover with warm water, and leave for ten minutes. Now "souse" them up and down to wash out the dirt and suds, cover with clean water, rinse in the same way, and hang out of doors to dry.

If the kitchen is large enough, have two tables. One of these may be used for mixing, preparing vegetables, etc., and should be covered with zinc. Tables come for this purpose already covered, but you can tack a sheet of zinc over your old table, and the result will be as good. This zinc can be washed as easily as can a dish or pan.

Try to have your mixing-table fitted with a large drawer. In this keep the smaller iron

or agate spoons, forks, knives, and other implements which will probably be needed while you are at work. Over the table, on the wall, tack a strip of wood, and fit this out with screw-hooks from which may hang the long-handled spoons, egg-beaters, bread-knives, etc. It is wonderful how many steps a busy woman must take when she has to cross the room every time she wants a spoon, fork or knife. The table-drawer may also contain the little articles used for fancy cooking, such as apple-corers, jagging-irons, and pastry tubes.

For use at the mixing-table have a chair upon which you can sit while you beat cake, or muffins, or prepare vegetables. I know some women claim that they cannot work as well sitting down. But this is a matter of habit, and one should accustom one's self to doing the work I mention sitting down. In the long run it will mean money in your pocket, and fewer greenbacks in the physician's wallet. I acknowledge that it is well-nigh impossible to roll out dough and pastry without standing up, but there are countless other bits of work that can be accomplished from one's chair. If you

wish, you may have a plain chair, with long legs, made for this purpose. One housewife had the arms cut from her child's discarded high chair, and used this at her kitchen table while she beat, peeled and mixed.

Have a meat-grinder screwed on to one end of your table. There are few articles of food which cannot be put through one of these grinders or choppers with as good results as if chopped with the old-fashioned chopping-knife in a wooden bowl. The new method is thorough, rapid and satisfactory. It is certainly a time and muscle-saver. As there are various adjustments for the meat-chopper, it may often take the place of a grater.

It may be well to mention some of the cases in which it may be used, thus saving time and strength for the housewife, as when chopping meat for hash, Hamburg steaks and mincemeat; chopping apples for mincemeat and puddings; preparing suet for the same purpose; grinding cocoanut after it is peeled, and thus doing away with the misery of grated fingertips; grinding cheese for Welsh rabbits, and chocolate for cakes and bonbons. In my own

family it is used for reducing stale bread, dried in the oven, to fine crumbs to be used in breading chops, cutlets, oysters, and croquettes.

As to the other table, keep this covered when not in use with a pretty, bright-colored cloth. Upon this table may be set the dishes brought out of the dining-room before meals, and after meals, and while courses are being changed. It takes in the kitchen the same place that the sideboard or serving-table does in the dining-room.

While we are dealing with the furniture of the kitchen I want to put in a plea for a rocking-chair and footstool. Does this seem unnecessary? If you, my reader, have ever indulged in the luxury of dropping into a big rocker, and putting your tired feet on the footstool in front of it for five minutes while waiting for the biscuit to brown, or the custard to "set" in the oven, you know why I advocate it. There are many "between-times" in which a rocker means a snatch of a much-needed rest. One woman has an easy chair in her spacious kitchen, and near it is a small stand holding some bit of reading-matter. While the bread

is baking, or the vegetables are boiling, the busy house-mother leans back in comfort and garners sundry bits of information. At such times many a woman would stand in front of the hot range, waiting blankly for the "things to cook."

Perhaps the strenuous sister will think that I advocate too much ease. But I have learned that we women need to conserve our physical strength if we would give of our best to those who need us. The pot will boil just as well if you sit down and look at a book instead of watching it. The effect upon your nerves and muscles is that of needful relaxation. Then why not accustom yourself to doing things in the easiest way, when this way does not interfere with the excellency of the work?

If you must have sash curtains at the kitchen windows, let them be of the plainest and most-easily-washed materials. Personally I do not approve of even short curtains in the kitchen. To my way of thinking they hold odors and are not neat. Try to be satisfied with dark green Holland shades, which can be pulled down and rolled up at will.

I am taking it for granted that you have running water in your kitchen sink. In this day of modern improvements, even the country-dweller knows the luxury of plumbing in his house. If there are some homes that do not have it, they are, nevertheless, fitted out with a pump at the kitchen-sink, and the days when pails of water had to be carried in from the well are, happily, things of the past.

If there are stationary tubs in the kitchen, they will, of course, be fitted with covers, and these, too, may be used as a table. In this case, if the room be small, one can dispense with the second table suggested above.

Every kitchen should have a large closet. Failing this, wide shelves must be put along one side of the room. If one has a husband or son with a knack for carpenter-work, he can make at small expense enclosed shelves with sliding glass doors for holding the china and glass required in the kitchen. On these shelves may also go earthen mixing-bowls, china pudding-dishes, measuring-glasses, and various articles made of crockery. The other utensils

should be on the pantry-shelves, with which we will deal later.

"Oh," sighed a housewife on entering a pretty, new kitchen, "if it could only look like this always!"

It can,—if the housekeeper does her own work. Try to establish the habit of *keeping clean* after getting clean. The average servant has a tremendous upheaval in her domain once in so often, at which time she washes and scrubs pans, polishes kettles, and gets everything in what she calls "spick-and-span" shape. Then she straightway gets all the articles she uses just as dingy and dull as they were before. Take care of each utensil as soon as you have finished with it. I know one farm-house in which the great copper kettle shines as if just burnished. When I first saw it I thought it was new, but after seeing it in the same state of polish for a year, I took the liberty of asking the owner how she "kept it looking like new." "By never allowing it to get dull," was the reply. "When I went to housekeeping over forty years ago I determined that my kitchen

and its contents should never get dingy. So I polish each article as soon as I have finished using it."

Looking about me I could believe it. It requires but a minute to wash the stains of smoke from the kettle, and to "shine" it with a bit of flannel dipped in whiting, and the result is worth the extra trouble.

The care of your range is one of those things which must not be neglected. A good fire cannot be built on a foundation of ashes and dead coals. Make a rule of emptying the pan under the grate each morning, or, if the fire is entirely out when you go to bed, empty the pan then. Wear gloves in doing this,—large, loose rubber gloves, or old kid ones belonging to some man of the family. Do not consider it wasted time to pull these on. The protected hands will be the whiter in consequence. Wear gloves also in blacking your stove, and in handling wood and coal.

Clean the range before lighting the fire. This done each morning, the work of "polishing" will not be hard. Proceed in a systematic way to lay the fire. In the bottom of the grate

put an abundance of rumpled paper, but not so much that it will pack as it burns. On this lay a generous supply of dry kindling. Open all the draughts, and touch a match to the paper. Leave the fire alone for about five minutes, or until the wood is burning briskly, then pour on gently a half-scuttle of coal. Your range should need no more attention for fifteen or twenty minutes, then, if it is very hot, the draughts may be closed. When the coal is all red, add a little more, and keep the draughts closed that the fire may not burn too quickly. The unthinking person wastes much coal. The range will cook better and the fire will be brighter if the fuel is not heaped up to the level of the lids. Have it only as high as the top of the brick lining of the range. Watch the fire, and when coal is needed, add a little, shutting off all dampers when the heat is not required, and opening them only when the ovens are in use, or the blaze is too low. Each range must be studied by the person managing it until she learns which dampers throw heat into the ovens and which send it up the chimney.

Kitchen windows must be carefully wiped off

every week, as the steam accumulating on them clouds them.

Burn all the garbage that cannot be used for feeding the chickens and pigs. Such are orange-peels, tea-leaves, coffee-grounds and egg-shells. It is a good plan to have a large pan in which such refuse from each meal is placed. The pan is then put in the oven until the contents become thoroughly dried, after which they can be burned in range or furnace, care being taken to open all the draughts that the odor may be carried upward and not poured forth through the house.

Another excellent way of disposing of worthless garbage is to have dug at some distance from the house a trench,—from four to five feet deep, and as long as space will permit. Into this throw the garbage, cover with dirt, and leave it to rot and "season" until next year, when it will make a valuable fertilizer.

The obnoxious "garbage-pail" should not be allowed to stand at the side of the kitchen door hour after hour, as is the custom in many houses. Have a pail with a closely-fitting cover, set it under the sink, line it with newspa-

per, and empty it twice a day, throwing washing soda into the water with which it is rinsed. The garbage-pail is one of the articles which attract flies in summer, and the odors from the decaying vegetable-matter are likely to produce illness,—to say nothing of the unsightliness and untidiness of such a pail standing about in plain sight.

And while we are mentioning flies it may be well to pause and consider how we are to keep our kitchens free from the obnoxious insects.

First of all have the windows and doors well-screened. Do not wait until the flies are really with you to have these screens put in after the winter stowing-away in attic or barn, but have them in place by the time the blossoms are well out in the orchard, and keep them in until the pests have been killed by frost. Next, keep food covered or put away except when it is being prepared or eaten. It takes but little exertion to cover the sugar cannister and return it to the pantry-shelves as soon as you have taken out what is needed for the cake you are preparing. And in doing this you are re-

moving one more temptation from the path of the fly. After the pots and pans are washed, and the kitchen brushed up, place sheets of sticky fly-paper on each table, and make the room dark. Have strong springs on the screen-doors and never allow anyone to prop them open for even a few minutes. When one remembers the diseases that flies carry on their feet, when one reflects upon the filthy articles on which they light before they enter a dainty kitchen, the thought is nauseating and fills one with a determination to fight the pests. Remember that typhoid fever may come in with any and every house-fly.

If, through some over-sight, flies invade your domain, attack them with murderous intent. Purchase the strongest Persian insect powder you can get. At night, after your kitchen is spick and span, and not a crumb is to be found by the most determined fly, fill insect-powder bellows with the ammunition, and proceed to blow it into every crack and corner of the room. Close pantry and closet doors before doing this. Sprinkle the powder on the floor and furniture, and about and in the sink. Put it even on top

of the range. Then retire quietly, leaving the room shut up as tight as windows and doors can make it. Early the next morning let in enough light,—but no air,—to allow you to see clearly, and, covering your hair with a dust-cap, brush up carefully all the powder. With a soft brush sweep it from all the furniture to the floor, and from there gather it up with the many unconscious flies in it and burn every particle of it. To make sure that you do this, deposit the powder and flies in a newspaper, wrap this up carefully and put it in as foundation for your range fire. Do not trust to the seeming death of the flies. Often fresh air and light will resuscitate them. The paper burned, throw open doors and windows, keeping the screens carefully closed. I have known this plan to rid a fly-infested room with wonderful rapidity. If one treatment does not accomplish a complete extermination, repeat it the second night.

Other pests that are sometimes found in the kitchen are ants and roaches, or water-bugs. The first do not necessarily mean that the house-wife is not careful to keep food out of their way, for they have a habit of appearing on

the cleanest of pantry-shelves in the most unprovoked manner. Kerosene is one of the best exterminators for them. Wipe off the wood-work with a cloth soaked in kerosene, pour the oil in the cracks about the sink, and inject it into any cracks in the wood-work. Oil of sassafras is also obnoxious to ants, and they are supposed to dislike the odor of cloves. For this reason some people strew shelves with whole cloves.

Another and more obstinate insect is the water-bug, or roach. Fortunately the remedy which is most obnoxious to him is easily procured, as it is simple borax. But he will not yield his position to this chemical unless one perseveres in attacks upon him. Two parts borax and one part powdered sugar strewed in his haunts each night for a week or ten days, then repeated once a week, will banish him,—always supposing that there are no crumbs of food about that he can eat. If he finds no food he will eat the sugar and borax, and will die,—or run away. We do not care which he does, so long as he leaves the premises.

In treating of the kitchen and its furnishings

the tubs have been mentioned, for in many houses there is no laundry. To the woman who does her own work a laundry apart from the kitchen is a doubtful benefit, as,—unless this room is supplied with a stove,—there are many steps to be taken and much heavy lifting to be done in carrying the clothes to the boiler on the range and from the range back to the tubs. Even when the laundry is supplied with a stove, this means the care of two fires, and the work is thereby made hard.

I hope that most of my readers can afford to have a woman come in and do the washing each week, even if they themselves must take a hand at the ironing. But whether a housekeeper is her own laundress or not, it is well for her to know how to do washing, as it will help her in giving her directions or in preparing the clothes for the laundress.

It makes the work of washing-day easier if the soiled articles are put to soak over-night. To do this properly, wet each article, rubbing into the most soiled places a good white soap. This process is applied only to white cotton and linen pieces, as colored clothes should not be

soaked over-night, and flannels would shrink if treated as I suggest. Put the soaped pieces in the tub, add a half-cup of household ammonia, and cover the clothes with luke-warm water. In the morning, drain off the water and throw the clothes into fresh hot water, and wash as usual. The soaking process will have "loosened" the dirt and made it easier to remove. Of course these white pieces should be boiled, after washing, but only for a few minutes, as they will turn yellow if boiled too long. Always have the dirt well washed out before putting the clothes in the boiler. Return to the tubs, wash in clear water, and, when the rinsing water shows no signs of cloudiness, transfer the cleansed articles to the blueing water. Do not allow your laundress—if you have one—to make this water too blue. This is often done to hide the yellowish tinge that proves that the linen has not been properly washed. From the blueing water, the pieces that are to be starched can go to the starch-pan, while the unstarched pieces are hung out on the line.

The work of ironing always seems simple compared with washing clothes, as one is not

dependent upon clear weather for satisfactory results.

A rule that is so well-known that it should be regarded more carefully than it is, is that every piece of clothing must be well-aired and thoroughly dried before packing down in the basket to be put away on linen shelves, in bureau drawers or on closet shelves. The fact that clothes put away damp may become spotted with mildew carries less weight with the housemother than does the thought that illness may follow upon sleeping between damp sheets or wearing clothing that is not perfectly dry.

The washing of flannels is an art that few laundresses care to acquire. We are all too familiar with the sight of once white and soft flannels shrunk into thick, stiff shapes; and it is all unnecessary.

Woolen articles should be soaked for several hours in soft luke-warm water. To the ordinary water add a little borax, in the proportion of a teaspoonful of the powder to each gallon of the liquid. At the end of several hours transfer the flannels to warm—never hot—water, and into this stir a little household am-

monia. Make good suds of this water and a white soap, and wash the pieces between the hands, but rub no soap directly on the garments. When all the dirt has been washed out, lay the clothes in clear water of the same temperature as that in which they have been washed. If this water does not take out all the suds, drain it off and add more of the same temperature. The last water should be perfectly clear. Soap left in flannels makes them harsh and irritates the skin. Do not wring out the garments, but hang them in the outer air,—unless it is so cold that they will freeze,—and allow them to drip dry; while drying, it is a good plan to stretch them into shape from time to time. Do not iron until absolutely dry, then press with an iron that is not very hot. Some persons wearing ribbed woolen underwear prefer pulling and smoothing it with the hands to having it ironed.

If one would make sure that delicately-colored clothing will not "run" or fade in washing, she may soak it,—each piece by itself,—in cold water, to which ox-gall has been added in the proportion of a tablespoonful of the gall to

a gallon of the water. Leave for some hours, or over-night, then wash in the usual way, except that colored clothes should not be boiled nor washed in the same water in which the white articles are washed. Always dry in the shade.

CHAPTER III

THE KITCHEN PANTRY

THE kitchen and its pantry are so closely allied that they seem almost as one room. In the ideal pantry there is an abundance of space for all the pots and pans needed for cooking, and for the various utensils that will not go into the drawer of the mixing-table, or on the shelves of the kitchen cabinet or closet.

There have been many lists given by various writers from which the housekeeper is supposed to order her kitchen necessities in the way of utensils. To the ordinary householder the number suggested is appalling. Some of the articles mentioned she has never heard of, others she does not know how to use, and some seem to her as labor-makers rather than labor-savers. To the initiated they may mean ease in cooking; to her, they stand for unnecessary complications.

I will give a list of the ordinary utensils that it is well to have, and to this number the reader may add what she wishes. Some of those I name are necessities to successful cooking; others are simple aids to the housekeeper.

Three double-boilers of varying sizes; three saucepans; an iron or agate soup-pot; a preserving kettle; two tea-kettles,—one large, one small; two coffee-pots; a griddle,—of soapstone, if possible; a waffle-iron; two frying-pans; a frying-basket, or a large, deep kettle for frying fritters, crullers and doughnuts; four pudding-dishes of different capacities; six layer-cake tins; two cake-tins, each with a funnel in the center; two loaf-cake tins; four bread-pans; a bread-raiser; a dozen muffin-rings; eighteen small muffin-pans; a dozen gem cups of earthenware; two pudding-moulds; two jelly-moulds; two covered roasters or dripping-pans; a ham-boiler; an asparagus-boiler; two dish-pans,—one for pots and pans, the other for the china and glass; two soup-strainers; a colander; a flour-sifter; two cake-cutters; a bread-knife; a large carver; a vegetable-knife; a long-handled flesh-fork; two long mix-

ing-spoons; two short mixing-spoons; one egg-whip; one egg-beater; one vegetable-press; one meat-grinder; three pie-plates; one wooden spoon; one chopping-bowl; a chopping-knife; a pastry or bread-board; four mixing-bowls; three quart bowls; a quart measure; a pint-measure; one large and one small pitcher; a cake-turner; a split spoon; a ladle; a can-opener; two graters; a nutmeg-grater; a rolling-pin; two tin pails with covers; two funnels; a cork-screw; two gridirons or broilers.

Of course this list does not include the knives, forks, spoons and crockery used in the kitchen. Nor have I mentioned the receptacles for holding the sugar, salt, flour and spices, nor have I even named the various dish-cloths, towels, etc.

I would like to advise the housewife never to allow the dish-towels to be used as dish-cloths. If she has a hireling to do her work she need not be surprised if they are used as floor-cloths! Scrubbing-brush and mop, with the pail that goes with them, do not seem to satisfy Bridget or Dinah, and the towels are called into service at times to wipe up water or milk that is spilt on the floor when the floor-cloth is not "handy."

The washing of the pots and pans is, to my way of thinking, the most disagreeable part of housework. I wish I could persuade the woman who takes care of her own utensils always to wear old gloves in washing them, or, as I have already advised, a pair of rubber gloves. There are times when the hands must be plunged into the water, and this process will redden and roughen them. But keep them out of the greasy water as much as possible, and, when you cannot do this, take the time and trouble to *wear the gloves.* What is known as an iron dish-cloth is a great convenience in scraping off grease and dirt. In one kitchen sand-paper is used to scrub the insides of pans and pots, and the result is excellent. Squares of this paper are hung on a ring at the side of the sink within easy reach.

In a coming chapter on the dining-room I will deal more fully with the subject of dish-washing. But while we are talking of pots and pans I want to remind my reader that if she will run hot water into any utensil as soon as it is emptied, and put into it a spoonful of washing soda and leave it until she has time to wash

it, the dirt will come off much more easily than if it is allowed to dry on the tin or iron.

Do not make the mistake of buying fine toweling for kitchen use. Select heavy linen, the gray or tan color edged with red or blue. It will wear better than will the soft quality that is suitable for glass or fine china. Wash the towels every day, throwing them into hot water to which ammonia has been added, and soaking for an hour before washing. Get out all the grease, then boil for a few minutes, rinse again and hang in the sunshine to dry. Never allow the soiled dish-towels to accumulate to a goodly number before rinsing. If you have not time to iron them, at least wash them.

The shelves on one side of the pantry may be kept for eatables in tins and wooden boxes. If one keeps a servant, there is little economy in buying by the large quantity. Norah or Bridget will not be as economical in her use of butter if there is a crock-full in the cellar as she will be if it comes to her in pound packages. But to the woman who has the handling of her own provisions, it is possible to buy in bulk, and to economize by doing so,—always suppos-

ing she has a good place to keep her provisions. And such a place is always to be found in a farm-house. Butter may be purchased by the tub, and kept in the cellar, a pound at a time being brought to the upper regions. Hams may hang from the cellar rafters and will keep for months. Ten-pound cannisters of coffee and tea will stand comfortably on the pantry-shelves, as will ten or twenty-pound sugar and flour tins. I do not advocate the purchase of a barrel of flour, unless one is sure that it will not be touched by rats or mice. It takes a long while for the average family to consume a barrel of flour, and the wooden receptacle is a favorite gnawing-place for the persistent rodents. If, however, you can keep them at bay by a good cat, or a satisfactory trap, you will save money by getting flour by the barrel.

It is well to have what one woman calls an "emergency shelf" in the pantry. On this may be kept things that are to be used when one finds one's self "short" of provisions, or when an unexpected guest comes to a meal. Here there may be cans of mushrooms, boxes of sardines, tins of potted meats, china jars of

cheese; boxes of fancy crackers; bottles of olives; crocks containing crullers and cookies; cans of some good brand of soup; cans of plum pudding, and other things that tempt the palate and help the housewife over many a tight place.

May I give an illustration of what I mean? One night, in a country house, word came that the man of the family,—who had not been expected home,—was bringing a guest to dinner and to spend the night. The wife was aghast. Her little children had taken their early supper of bread-and-milk and gone to bed. She had planned to have (after the fashion of the woman who eats alone) a bit of cold meat, bread-and-butter, and a cup of tea. It was snowing heavily, and the village shop was a mile away.

Then she remembered her "emergency shelf" and went to look at it. First of all, she took down a can of mock turtle soup. So far, so good, but what of meat? A piece—none too large—of cold mutton was in the larder. But what was that for two hungry and cold men? Then she had an inspiration. A can of potted ham was opened; the cold mutton was chopped

fine and mixed with the potted ham, a little melted butter was added, the mixed meat was made into sausage-shaped rolls and encased in biscuit dough and baked. With this went some mashed potatoes and scalloped tomatoes, made of the contents of a can put up in the summer. Olives and pickles were put on the table; a canned plum pudding was heated and served with wine sauce; crackers and a jar of cheese were passed with the black coffee. The guest wondered "how in the depth of winter one could serve such a dinner miles out in the country!" So much for the "emergency shelf."

While on the subject of cooking, I want to plead with my country sister to become less familiar with two articles upon which she depends too often for the health of her family and for her own welfare. These are pork and the frying-pan. Both are excellent in their way, but that "way" is not three times a day. I know what a convenience pork is, and I also know, from delectable experiences, how good spare-ribs, tenderloins and fresh hams are. But it is not a wholesome article of diet when fresh, and, when salted, it is, to some stomachs,

well-nigh impossible to digest. Use it, but not oftener than twice or three times a week.

As to the frying-pan, it may be a blessing or a bane. It is often the latter. It is an easy utensil to use; it takes less time and skill to fry a chop than to broil it; the fish is more easily fried than cooked in the oven or on the gridiron; the fried egg can be watched, and need not be timed by the clock as the boiled egg should be,—consequently the busy and over-hurried cook acquires the frying-pan habit.

I do not mean to imply that the much-abused utensil is not a perfectly legitimate one. It is, in fact, almost an essential, but it should not usurp the place of other culinary implements. A chop should not be fried, unless it has been first dipped in egg and cracker-crumbs, when it may be *sauté* in very hot fat,—not allowed to lie in the pan and soak up grease. Even when well fried it is less digestible than when broiled.

It should not be necessary to remind the housekeeper that a fried steak is a culinary solecism—I had almost said an atrocity.

To fry properly, the pan must be hot and the fat simmering before the food is laid into the

receptacle. As soon as it is cooked, it must be removed and drained free of grease in a hot colander.

The average farmer's family eat too much grease. Were they to deny themselves so much fried foods, and so many pies, their complexions would be better, for their digestions would be good. As I have intimated before, the health of the family depends on the kitchen more than on any other room in the house. The queen of this domain should know something of dietetics. It is her business to read up books on this subject or to study cook-books until she makes herself familiar with the various foods that produce certain results; until she knows that some foods,—such as meats, fats and many sweets,—are needed in cold weather, but should be used sparingly during the heated term. She should remember that fruits are excellent in winter as well as in summer, and, when fresh fruits are not available, she may set upon her table stewed, preserved and canned fruits.

This is not a cook-book, so I cannot go into this subject as extensively as I wish I could.

But when I see the sallow faces of some country girls, and look at their red and roughened hands, I wish that I might have a heart-to-heart talk with them, and try to make them understand that there is no reason for such conditions if they will only take advantage of the remedies that lie right at their hand. Less salt meat, and more tramping along country roads; less tea and coffee, and greater quantities of fresh cold water; less pie, and more fruit; less pork and cabbage and more bread-and-butter and buttermilk. This last, by the way, is a wonderful cosmetic, and improves the complexion when used either internally or externally.

In spite of the above paragraph and of my urgent advice with regard to the wearing of gloves while doing housework of all kinds, this is no more a "beauty-book" than it is a "cook-book." But I cannot accompany my sister through her home and not utter a word of warning or advice here and there with regard to her care of her health and her looks. The two go together, and one is as much a duty as the other. We women have a right to look as

well as is compatible with our other duties. And if, on the rounds of our work, we can improve our health and appearance it is our manifest duty to do it.

CHAPTER IV

THE CELLAR

TRASH in the house has a tendency to rise to the attic or sink to the cellar. This inclination should be checked by the housekeeper.

Do not allow the cellar to become a lurking-place for the broken articles that will never be mended, nor for refuse of any kind. There is no reason why this part of the house may not be kept neat and orderly.

The floor should be of concrete or cement. A dirt floor can never be clean, and the cost of concrete is not great. It is easily swept, and can be washed off if necessary. The walls must be white-washed each Spring. The entire cellar, with the exception of the coal-bins and wood-bins, must be swept every week or two, and the cobwebs removed from side-walls and ceiling. There is really no reason why these sure indications of untidiness should lin-

ger in this part of the house, just because it is under-ground and unobserved by the chance visitor.

The cellar windows can be kept clean, thus making the always shaded place less dark and gloomy. One of these windows will open upon the coal-bin, and through this the coal can be poured in by means of a chute. When it is possible, have the wood cut up out of doors, and then put into the cellar. Have one receptacle for kindling; another for the sticks of fire-wood to be used in range or open fire-places.

If you would get the good of your cellar have one part of it,—away from the furnace, wood and coal-bins,—partitioned off, and provided with a closely-fitting door, to which there is a padlock and key. In this room there should be a window to admit light enough to enable you to see the various articles stored there. Here may stand the barrels of apples and potatoes, boxes of other vegetables, and the refrigerator or ice-box in summer. In winter this may be moved to the pantry, if wished, although most housekeepers prefer to have it in the cellar all

the year. The ice keeps better when the receptacle is in a cool, dark place.

Have the cellar store-room provided with swinging-shelves on which may stand the pans of milk. One of these shelves may be enclosed with wire netting, and, on this can go the remainders of a cold roast or other large pieces of cooked meat in cold weather. In hot weather, the meat will do better in the ice-box, as will the cream and the pitcher of milk intended for table-use.

In winter the farmer's wife can stow away butter, etc., in an enclosed box on the kitchen window-sill or on her cellar shelves. But in summer the case is different, and the refrigerator must bear the burden of all the articles of food which need a low temperature to preserve them.

As the ice-box possesses great potentialities for evil it should be cared for systematically. Perhaps the country housewife does not appreciate this as she should. But she should realize that the health of her family demands that she give the box her personal care.

Last summer a family from the city was

boarding at a farmhouse. The farmer's wife went away on a visit to friends for a few days, and, during her absence, the boarders noticed that the butter, hitherto sweet and fresh, had a disagreeable taste, which increased in strength with each passing day. In vain they complained to the servants who had charge of the house during the absence of the mistress. They declared that the butter was from the "same lot as Mrs. Brown used when at home." Finally the city housewife asked permission to inspect the interior of the ice-chest, which, the servants said, was cleaned regularly. Upon investigation she saw that close to the butter-crock stood a large bowl of cold boiled cabbage which had been put away and forgotten. The disagreeable taste was accounted for.

If you buy ice, be careful as to the kind sold to you. If you have your own ice harvested you may be tolerably certain that the source is pure and uncontaminated. Even then, as the blocks must be packed down in sawdust to preserve them in the ice-house, this dust clings to the ice when it is brought to you. Therefore wash it thoroughly before putting it in the re-

frigerator. A good plan is to fasten the ice-tongs securely into the block and hang these from a strong hook outside the kitchen door, then pour cold water over the ice until it is clean.

If you must be economical with ice, wrap each cake in a piece of old woolen blanket, which must be removed and boiled in water and baking-soda at least once a week. To preserve ice, it is, of course, necessary to exclude air from the surface, and for this purpose some housewives use layers of newspapers. This is not a good habit, for not only is printers' ink in itself impure, but the paper melts and adheres so closely to the ice—freezes fast, in fact—that it does not always melt off until in the glass or pitcher of water.

Unfortunately there are refrigerators of old-fashioned make too good to be discarded, but which have not adjustable shelves, and which are, therefore, difficult to keep in a sanitary state. The owner of such must redouble her vigilance, and all the compartments must be scrubbed frequently with a brush with very stiff bristles, using household ammonia diluted

only enough to make it harmless to the hands. Care must be taken that the bristles penetrate to every crack and crevice and into the shelf corners. One housewife keeps an open box of charcoal, to absorb odors, upon each shelf.

Arrange to clean the receptacle when one supply of ice is nearly exhausted and before the next arrives. If this is not feasible, wrap the ice in the blanket, then in paper, and lay on the "cellar bottom" while washing the box.

It is a mistake to clean the refrigerator throughout oftener than once a week, as it becomes so warm that it takes an hour or more for it to grow as cool as it was before the cleaning, and in consequence the ice melts rapidly and viands are affected by the sudden change of temperature. Before beginning the work, have ready on the range a large kettle of boiling water into which has been stirred a lump of washing-soda. Take all eatables from the refrigerator and cover them closely. Take out the shelves, if movable, wash them off quickly with the soda water, then rinse in clear cold water, wipe with a clean towel, and lay in the sunshine to dry and sweeten. If the drain-pipe from

your ice-chest connects with a pan, empty this and scald it. Replace it, and proceed to wash out the inside of the box with the scalding liquid, pouring an abundance of it through the drain-pipe and running the long-handled wire brush, made for this purpose, down to the very bottom of the pipe. When the entire receptacle is thoroughly cleansed, wash it with cold water to chill it. Take out the waste-pan and empty it again, replace it, and as soon as the box feels cool to the touch, put in the shelves, the ice and the eatables.

Butter and lard in small quantities may be kept right against the ice if desired, but it is well to put on the shelves of the chest vegetables and fruit. These should be carefully watched and at the first sign of decay the affected article must be thrown away, as in this case one sinner destroys much good. A decayed apple will injure those next to it, cause an unpleasant odor in the entire compartment containing it, and make itself evident in the taste of the butter or of milk if either of these chances to be within range of its influence. All fruit brought into the house must be wiped with

a damp cloth before it is put away. In the case of small fruits, such as berries, cherries and grapes, this is impossible, but they must be carefully picked over and all soft ones discarded. Food having a strong taste or odor should be kept away from milk or butter, and on a shelf by itself.

Of course the work of caring for the refrigerator is greatly simplified for the woman who is able to get a modern one and to select from the large supply now to be bought just such as suits her taste. She will find herself confronted with an embarrassment of riches. Some of the newest receptacles have glass shelves so highly polished that one would think any microbe would slip upon them and break his iniquitous neck,—if microbes have necks! But the woman who has a plain and convenient ice-box can keep it quite as sanitary as can her city sister with the more elaborate and much more expensive receptacle.

In selecting a new ice-box economy of ice should be considered, and to this end one should be chosen with walls so thick and so well insulated that rapid melting is prevented.

While the ice-compartment need not be huge, it should be large enough to contain a good-sized block, as this will melt more slowly in proportion than would a small piece, or several small pieces.

As an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, it is a good plan to be on the safe as well as on the economical side and keep bottles of drinking water in the ice-box, close against the frigid block. As often as one of these is emptied it should be refilled immediately, so that chilled water, uncontaminated by microbes from the ice, may always be on hand for table and individual drinking. If this rule is adhered to one may have the refreshing effects of iced water without the dangers that are said to lurk in it when it contains melting ice.

The breaking of ice is always a wasteful process. If, however, cracked ice is needed, there is an economical way of severing a piece of the desired size from the main lump. Instead of hammering or hacking at it with a pick—which, by the way, may slip and punch a hole in the ice-box lining—press the point of the instrument slowly but firmly upon a spot above the

corner of a block, using the palm of the hand against the end of the handle, pushing steadily and with force.

No matter how cool the cellar is, fruit and vegetables kept there in barrels or boxes will require watching. As often as every week they should be picked over as has been already described. All apples containing specks should be used as soon as possible for cooking purposes, care being taken to cut away all affected parts. Such fruits as apples, oranges, pears, etc., will last longer and keep firmer if each piece is wrapped in tissue paper. This is a rather tedious process, but, if one has choice fruit, it is worth the effort.

In the store-room in the cellar it is well to keep all preserves, jellies, and vegetables put up in glass cans. These articles should be kept away from a strong light and from a warm atmosphere. So the cellar is an excellent place for them. One of the swinging shelves may be utilized for these glasses and jars. But do not have the shelf so high that you cannot easily reach anything at the back of it. Or, if you wish, have a couple of steps that can be moved

about at your will. For the best preserved fruits should be frequently inspected so that if one jar begins to ferment it may be attended to at once. As soon as there is a foam near the lid of the jar, turn the contents into a preserving kettle and boil again, adding a little more sugar if necessary. Scald out the jar and refill it with the boiling fruit, screwing on the air-tight top while the jar is overflowing.

Watch the jellies, also, but remember that mold on the surface of fruit or jelly does not mean fermentation or injury to the sweetmeat. When ready to use, lift off the scum and the jelly that adheres to it, and all below it will be found sweet and good.

Never allow the door of communication between the main cellar and the store-room to remain open, thus raising the temperature of the latter. In summer have all the cellar windows fitted with screens that no flies may enter.

In the spring have the furnace emptied and thoroughly cleaned, and ready for the fall. Ashes should be taken out regularly, and sifted. Do not allow this sifting to be done in the cellar. The fine white dust will arise through the

cracks and crevices, or through the registers, and rest on all the furniture in the house.

But the sifting of ashes is an economical process that is not to be despised by the frugal householder. The grate always lets through an occasional lump of coal that has not been burned at all. These may be put in a box by themselves. A far larger number of cinders will be found, and, when freed from the ashes clinging to them, are excellent for keeping the fire going when one does not wish to have it fed with fresh coal. Before removing the ashes for sifting, have them sprinkled with water, and, when coal is to be put into the cellar, see that it, too, is well wet, so that your house may not be filled with the fine, almost impalpable coal dust that blackens delicate fabrics, and grimes carpets and hangings.

CHAPTER V

THE DINING-ROOM

THE farm-house dining-room is often one of the most attractive apartments in the home. The very mention of it brings to the mind thoughts of a sunny room in midwinter, with growing plants on the window-sills, and white linen and shining glass and china on the table.

In furnishing your dining-room do not have too many large articles in it. If it is already furnished, dispense with any extra tables and unnecessary chairs. A sideboard is essential. A small serving-table is a convenience. These, with the table and straight chairs, are all that are required, except rug and curtains.

Unless your bare floor is so rough and unpresentable that it is impossible to stain it, do not cover it with a regular carpet. Instead have a large rug that can be lifted and shaken when advisable. The size of this rug will depend

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DINING ROOM

upon the dimensions of your room. It should be large enough to come within three feet of the wall. The bare space beyond the rug should be stained of a color to match or to harmonize with the wood of chairs and table. Ready-made rugs or "art squares" are not expensive. Or, if one prefers, she may make her own rug of breadths of plain ingrain carpet or "filling," sewing the sides of the breadths together and finishing the ends with binding to match the carpet. Three or four breadths of carpet will be all that you need to make the floor-covering wide enough. Avoid delicate or very bright colors for this. One shows dirt readily; the other offends the eye and is out of harmony with the rest of the room. Sage or olive-green is always good, and does not betray crumbs and every bit of dust.

Even if you are so fortunate as to be the possessor of a great many pieces of handsome solid or plated silver do not keep it on the sideboard unless you are sure that you will have time enough to keep it clean. Few things are in worse form than a buffet loaded with tarnished silver-ware. If, therefore, you have not the

leisure and strength to polish your plate regularly, keep it out of sight, and put in its place china or glass. Coal-gas and salt air both blacken silver, and make it necessary to clean it several times a week if one would keep it bright. When there are so many duties for one pair of hands to perform, it is foolish to lay upon them one more task, when that is not one that makes for the happiness or comfort of the family or guests.

Set a few articles of good design on your sideboard. Such may be one or two cut-glass bowls, a pretty tea-pot or coffee-pot, and several dainty cups and saucers. Keep the side-table covered with a cloth, but do not have anything else set upon it, as it will be needed at meal-times when one can place here the dessert-plates, or the dishes that have been taken from the table and which await removal to the kitchen. When one keeps no maid such a stand is a great convenience and saves many steps.

Have your table-linen as fine as your purse can afford, and do not be afraid to use it. The habit of giving each member of the family *one*

clean napkin per week is an untidy one. I appreciate the fact that one must be economical with regard to one's laundry-work, but when a napkin is actually soiled do not put it back on the table. Supply each member of the family with the good old-fashioned napkin-ring, to make sure that he always gets his own napkin. If one is careful, the large dinner napkins which are used but once a day need be renewed only twice, or at most, three times a week. The small breakfast or luncheon napkins should be renewed oftener, as these are used twice as much as are the others.

If there is one locality in which everything should be dainty it is the room in which meals are served and eaten. It is wonderful how much better viands taste if daintily served, and eaten from pretty china. In this day there is little excuse for the heavy stone-china ware, about which one man declared that it made him feel as if he were drinking his coffee over the edge of a stone wall. One may get tastefully-decorated china, of light weight, so cheaply that even the woman in moderate cir-

cumstances may have it. When she is so fortunate as to take care of it herself, it is not likely to be broken.

I say "fortunate," for, while I appreciate how much work is involved in the care of one's own house, and while I, myself, do not like to wash pots and pans, I do believe that if there is ever a time when a woman's fingers itch to handle her own dainty belongings it is when she stands before her china-shelves,—especially if she finds hidden away behind other crockery some particularly fragile and dainty bit that has been broken by a careless servant.

The washing of dining-room china is, after all, a pleasant task if properly done. It is a good plan to do it in the dining-room itself, if one would save herself much passing back and forth from kitchen to dining-table. When a meal is finished, pile all the dishes, from which food has been carefully scraped, on the side-table. Remove the table-cloth, and the felt "sound-cloth" which should go under it. (If one prefers, this sound cloth may be a quilted cotton pad, which is easier to keep clean than is one of felt.) Put a large asbestos mat at

one end of the table, and set a pan of scalding water on this. Lay the various dishes in the pan, wash the rough dirt and grease from them with a mop, and pile them on a tin tray on the side-table, which should be put along-side of the large table.

Take out the soiled water and bring in a large pan with a partition in the center, in one side of which should be scalding suds, to which a little household ammonia has been added, while the other side contains clear boiling water. First of all, wash the glasses in the clear water, turning over quickly and wiping dry, as soon as washed, with a fine glass towel. Put into the soapy water the small silver and, when all the grease has been washed off, drop it into the clear water, then take out and wipe off each piece briskly. Lay in a pile until the other dishes have been washed in the same way. Renew the water when it gets cool. For this purpose have a large kettleful on the range all the time. Use a soap-shaker of wire, that no bits of soap may adhere to the dishes. Never "drain" any one of the pieces if you would have them glisten and look as they should.

This is a favorite—in fact universal—trick with housemaids. Were this not true, their glass, china, and silver would not show evidences of slovenly cleansing. The last dish wiped dry, carry out the pan, scald it well, and hang it, with the mop, also scalded, at the side of the sink. Throw the dish-towels into hot water if they need washing. If not, hang on a clothes-horse to dry thoroughly.

On your return to the dining-room, and before you remove the loose gloves which I hope you have worn while washing the dishes, attack the pile of silver with a bit of flannel dipped in alcohol, and rub hard. If this is done each day there will be no need for the weekly polishing that is so often a heavy task. If the silver has been neglected, and is really tarnished, put it over the fire in a tin pot containing boiling water and a heaping tablespoonful of silver-powder. Boil hard for five minutes, then take out the silver and polish with a bit of flannel as soon as you have dried it. This is a short and easy way of cleaning knives, forks, and spoons, when compared to the usual method of rubbing powder on each piece with flannel or brush. If

one takes ordinarily good care of her silver, this cleaning is all that is necessary.

The dishes washed and put away, throw a cloth over the sideboard, and open the windows while you brush out the dining-room. The air will be better, even in winter, for these five minutes' freshening. With a flannel bag put over the broom-bristles, wipe off the bare part of the floor, then dust the tables, legs and all, and the chairs, woodwork and window-glass. Remove the cover from the sideboard, wipe off carefully every article on that, and the work of the dining-room is done. I rather like the old fashion of covering the table between meals with a colored brocade or tapestry cloth. Or, if one prefers, the table may remain bare, except for a center-piece on which rests a pot with a plant in it. Always try to have flowers of some kind for the table. Cut blossoms are out of the question in winter, but one has always a potted geranium or other plant that will grow and blossom in the house.

Have short sash-curtains at the windows. Long curtains are somewhat out-of-place in the dining-room, as here one must brush up

after each meal, and the hangings that reach to the floor become soiled and gray. Have your sash-curtains of madras in harmonious colors, or of pure white muslin, edged with a dainty ruffle.

Do not allow yourself to get into the habit of thinking that "anything goes when there is just the family present." Set your daily table with the utmost care, and, if possible, in the manner approved by the fashion of the day. You will thus accustom your children to having things at home as they may expect to find them among refined people when they go out in the world. Do not let them look back, when they are grown, to a home where the linen was yellow and worn, the china chipped, and the silver dull, and where things were set on the table in a helter-skelter way. Study books and magazines dealing with the proper setting of the table, and live up to the rules laid down there as nearly as you can. Do not sneer at finger-bowls and other fashionable table appointments, and deem them "a nuisance." Or, if you do consider them a bother, do not let the children know it. If you have little daugh-

ters teach them to help you make the table attractive. I know of one small girl of eight years of age who, with a piece of flannel, polishes the various articles of silver that go on the table, and lays them in their proper places at each cover. She feels that it is her home as well as her mother's and she has a just pride in it. The mother has trained her to think that a well-appointed table is a duty, as well as a pleasure.

If there are many children, use large feeding-bibs for the younger ones,—the youngsters who are still in high-chairs. These bibs are easy to wash and save the napkins much wear and tear.

A custom that makes for economy in the use of table-cloths is that of the "polished" table on which are laid a large square, or center-piece, and doylies for breakfast and luncheon. The table need not be polished to a gloss, but must be prepared by one who understands the work, and rubbed with a dull, or shining, finish. The dull finish is more easy to care for than is the shining surface, as every little mark does not show upon it. With a table thus prepared,

one should use asbestos mats under the doylies on which hot dishes or plates are set. Asbestos mats encased in embroidered covers come in sets and are convenient and pretty. These covers can be slipped off and laundered as often as necessary.

In Summer, except when the sweeping of the room is going on or when the family are actually at table, keep the dining-room as dark as possible. Exclude the light if you would have no flies. Do not allow food to remain on the table after a meal is over. Of course all the rooms in the house will be thoroughly screened, and all outside doors will be supplemented by doors of wire screening with strong springs. In such conditions, there is carelessness somewhere if flies enter. Nevertheless, someone is often careless, and the flies will make their way to localities where food is to be found. Therefore it is well to place a sheet of sticky fly-paper, laid on a larger sheet of newspaper, on the dining-table between meals. Never lay a piece of it on a chair, anywhere. The reasons for this warning are obvious.

CHAPTER VI

THE LIVING-ROOM

Some persons call the apartment with which we are now dealing "the drawing-room," others term it "the parlor," still others, "the sitting-room," while some extremely old-fashioned people still cling to the odd expression, "the best room." In this chapter I mean to call it "the living-room," for that is what it ought to be in every well-regulated household. Not that it need be known by the name I give it, but that it should be the place where the family *live* when in-doors, and when not eating, sleeping, or engaged in the various duties of the home.

In too many families, the "best room" is the worst room, so far as comfort is concerned. We all know the musty smell of the apartment that is kept closed tightly, except when there is a wedding, a funeral, or when the minister

comes to supper. I remember one house in which the cheerful dining-room was also the family sitting-room. In here were a great couch and easy chairs, a desk, a table with books on it, and a bay-window full of plants. Right across the hall was the parlor. Into this company was ushered, unless said company was so fortunate as to be on terms of intimacy with the hostess, when the cheery dining-room became the reception room.

But that parlor! I can smell it now! When I called there the outside world was bathed in early Summer sunshine; the air was laden with the breath of blossoms; nature was in a riot of glow and color. From all this I stepped into "the best room." I sat there awaiting my hostess and feeling the chill of dead and unburied yesterdays creeping to the marrow of my bones. Some of the furniture was covered with black horsehair; other pieces were upholstered in red plush, and were very hard and unyielding. The carpet had huge figures on it. The blinds were bowed, so that a few straggling rays of light entered. The windows were closed tightly. There was an exact place in

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LIVING ROOM

the room for each bit of furniture, and each piece was set on that identical place. The square piano was closed, and covered with a heavy cloth. On this rested a piece of Rogers statuary, two oil paintings, a big vase, and a stuffed bird covered with glass. All the portraits on the wall were of people who were dead, or looked as if they wished they were. I noticed a cleared place near the center of the room, and had to fight imagination to keep from remembering how many family coffins had stood there, and it took a great deal of faith to convince me that the room had been aired since the last funeral. And this was "the best room!"

And yet it was possessed of infinite capabilities. The long windows opened upon a vine-covered veranda at one side; at the other, upon a smooth lawn. There was a fire-place, closed now by a hideously-decorated "fire-board." I found myself wishing that I might be allowed to split it up for kindling-wood and burn it in the very fire-place its ugliness concealed.

I wish I could impress upon the farmer's wife that there are few greater ornaments to a room

than one of these old fire-places. She too often feels that after furnace, or steam, or hot water heat has been installed the dear old hearth and chimney-piece are out of fashion. This they never are. If you are so happy as to possess one in your living-room, make the most of it. Fit it up with a pair of fire-dogs,—the older the better. But if you have no old ones, get a pair of good design in brass or wrought iron. I count as one of my choicest possessions an old iron fender on which my great-grandmother used to warm her dainty feet. You are fortunate if you possess such a bit of furniture. If not, buy a fender of some kind. Always have a fire laid in the chimney-place and do not be afraid to light it when the mornings and evenings are chilly. The family will find it a center of attraction and gravitate to it as surely as birds seek the light. I know that many persons claim that an open fire-place makes a room cold in winter when there is furnace heat in the house. A remedy for this is to stuff the lower part of the chimney, just above the fire-place, with newspapers, which can be removed when

one wishes to have a fire. Let this be often during the winter.

Wall-covering must, of course, be chosen to suit one's individual taste in such matters. But a wall-paper of a solid color is always pleasanter to live with than one of a figured design. Cartridge paper makes an excellent back-ground for pictures. Be careful of the color you choose, and be sure that it will not be out of harmony with the hangings. A good shade of green is excellent if the draperies will go well with it. But avoid a bright green, or a very dark shade,—unless your room be unusually well-lighted. A dark green absorbs the light, and darkens an entire apartment. Unless you have hard-wood finishings, a white enamel paint is a charming contrast to the green paper. If you select some other color for the paper do so with great care. Red one tires of after a while, and other shades of red will not harmonize with it. A warm buff is pretty,—especially if you have portieres of a deep brown. But choose some one color-scheme and adhere to it. I do not mean that you must have all your

furniture recovered at one time to harmonize with the wall-paper. Few persons can afford to do that. But when you do bring in a new shade, select one that will not, as the saying is, "swear at" what you already have.

Do not use cheap chenille portieres if you can get any other kind. If not, have those you now possess dyed to suit your scheme. Green or golden-brown hangings are safe, as a rule.

And now as to the window-draperies. As this room is where you all sit to read, and sew, and talk, get curtains that will be pretty and yet serviceable. I wish all housewives would avoid Nottingham lace curtains! They are not pretty, and they are common. They often cost more than simple muslin curtains would and are just as hard to keep clean and are not half as dainty. Buy window-hangings that are as handsome as your purse will permit,—always bearing in mind that they must be chosen with a regard for their wearing qualities. In these days one can purchase pretty net curtains, with a conventional border, at a very moderate price. They clean well, and are artistic and satis-

factory. I am supposing that you mean to have but one pair of hangings at each window. If, however, you prefer sash-curtains against the windows, and long ones inside, get for the short pair a pretty net. For the long curtains fish-net to correspond with your wall-covering would be attractive.

While you want everything in this living-room to be as handsome as you can afford, do not choose anything that is so easily soiled that it will mean extra work in a short time, or that it will become a bugbear to the members of the family. Chairs that have such delicate coverings that husband or sons must be warned "*please* not to sit in that chair"; rugs that are so handsome that one grudges seeing them walked on, do not make for comfort or peace in the family. Insist that your boys and girls shall learn to care properly for nice things, by accustoming them to such things, but do not err so far in that direction that home is not a pleasant place to live.

A man with a particular wife got into the habit of going across the road to his neighbor's

house after dinner each night. A friend asked him why he did this. He hesitated a moment, then said bluntly:—

"Because Smith's wife lets him smoke in the house, and my wife will not allow it. She says it makes the house smell bad; she says the ashes make dirt; she says the smoke dulls the polish on the furniture. Yet I notice that Smith's house is just as nice as ours, that his furniture is quite as handsome, and yet he and his boys smoke in the parlor every evening, and his wife sits by and does not mind,—or does not seem to."

There lies the secret of making people comfortable,—not to seem to mind, if one does. There are so many things about which one must say "Don't!" that when one can pass by some of the trifles that are not actually wrong, it is well to do so. No woman likes to have her draperies redolent of tobacco-smoke, and the ashes on the rugs and carpet are a nuisance,—in spite of the men's assurance that they "keep away moth." But let us look at matters from the masculine standpoint and pretend that they *do* prevent moth,—(who knows that they

don't?) and take the extra trouble of brushing up the ashes that fall, or, better still, have an ash-tray right by every smoking masculine. And suppose that one must open the windows for a few minutes longer than usual to let out the smoke,—is not that better than to have the man and boys stay out because the smoke is not allowed to come in?

We women need to look at things in their proper perspective. We are too prone to make idols of our belongings, or of our homes, to the exclusion of the spirit of home. Have the rugs in your living-room shaken when necessary, and your carpet swept a little oftener than your widowed and childless neighbor does, and be glad you have someone to make a genuine Home for.

I do not advocate untidiness,—in fact a slovenly housekeeper is a very unpleasant creature. But, after all, one can only do one's best, and must let the rest go. Train the youngsters to clear up the "mess" they make, to love your pretty house as you do, to take a personal pride in it, and then keep it as clean as you can. But do not wear out nerves and temper complaining

at unavoidable disorder and at the little confusion which the presence of jolly and home-loving people is bound to cause. Simply shrug your mental shoulders, say to yourself,—"Well the room was clean once to-day," and add, "but it has gotten smokey and disordered in the cause of comfort and happiness!" There will be no hurt or bitter feeling and no fretfulness if this is your attitude of mind.

I hope that my readers are not the possessors of, or possessed by, a large variety of bric-a-brac! It is a doubtful blessing. I sometimes wish that there was a law against it, or that it cost so much that most people could not buy it. Vases with huge bodies and with necks so small that a single flower-stem is all that can be squeezed in; shepherdesses with crooks that look like exaggerated peppermint-sticks; cherubs whose inflated cheeks make one fancy they have ulcerated teeth on both sides at once; red lobsters and hideous green frogs,—all made of ware of various kinds—are among the impossible things which well-meaning persons send the housekeeper as gifts upon one occasion or another. They are of no use, and certainly are

not pretty. They gather dust, and never get broken. The smirking "Rebecca at the well" statuette will outlast several generations of dainty cups and saucers that combine beauty with usefulness.

Do not think me hopelessly practical. I am not that. But I do want to put in a plea for things that are useful as well as beautiful, or, if not useful, have enough beauty to warrant their existence. A really good plaster cast is such an article; so is a good engraving; but hydrocephalic china frogs, and prancing horses with legs that are not mates, do not belong to the things which make for beauty.

As to pictures! It would be interesting to note how many family squabbles have pictures as their starting-point. George Eliot says,— "A difference of taste in jokes is a great strain on the affections." I do not think it is to be mentioned in the same category as a difference of taste in pictures. The husband loves a brightly-colored painting of a ship floundering in a deep sea, with gulls one-half the size of the vessel swooping up and down across the entire sea-scape. To the wife it is a thing of horror.

She intimates, hesitatingly, that "perhaps the boys" (poor boys!) "might like that picture in their room—" She gets no further. If a look could kill, she would drop lifeless. Such reproach, such wounded feeling, as are combined in the gaze with which her husband turns to her. *That* picture! The idea of *that* picture being sent up to the boys' room! Why a dear old uncle presented that painting to the family forty years ago. It was done by a friend of his. How could anyone want to put that wonderfully good bit of an oil-painting, where, for all he knows, those careless boys, may punch a hole in it? In her innermost soul the wife may whisper,—"I wish they would!" But she lets the matter drop, and the picture stays where it is.

Do I exaggerate? Have not you, my sister, gone through experiences similar to the one I have just described? Perhaps it was your husband who disliked the picture your grandmother gave you, or the table-cover that was always on your dear old aunt's table. And when your husband spoke of it as "that hideous thing" the

quick tears sprang to your eyes. It seemed like sacrilege.

But it was not. We of this present day have different views from those held a century, or half-a-century ago. Because the dear old grandmother used a certain thing does not mean that it was, of necessity, beautiful. Sometimes it was, of course, but age does not mean harmony in all cases. Just because we do not appreciate this fact our rooms are crowded with bits of furniture, with pictures, with brac-a-brac that we must keep, because to give them away or to banish them to the attic will hurt someone. As if the dear dead would have us keep things they used just because they *did* use them! Perhaps they were tired of them, too, but had "a sentiment" against throwing them away. Surely, now that they are in a better world, they know just how ugly those things were.

Therefore I counsel my reader to get rid of the articles that are not useful or that are hideous and unnecessary. If one of the atrocities chances to be a bit of furniture that cannot be dispensed with until you save the money

to put something in its place, make the best of it, by recovering it, or throwing some pretty bit of drapery over its hard outlines. Fortunately, some of the old things are the most artistic. All of us love the old mahogany pieces, the huge arm-chairs with the "wings" at the sides, the work-stands with the "leaves" on each end. Lucky is the woman who possesses such.

If you and your husband can agree on pictures, have no paintings unless they are really good ones on your living-room walls. Remember when you buy a picture that it is a thing with which you have to live for years to come.

In few farm-houses is there a library separate from the living-room. In this latter apartment, therefore, must go the books, and they enhance the home-look. Do not be afraid to line the walls as high as your shoulder with book-shelves. These can be made by a village carpenter, if you wish. But I have found excellent shelves of mission-work that are cheap and satisfactory. They come in sections, and a new section can be added whenever it is needed. It is superfluous to say that shelves

with glass doors are the best kind to have, but they are not cheap, and one can do very well without them. One woman consoles herself for the fact that she cannot afford glass fronts to her book-shelves by saying that she feels more free to help herself to a book when it is not tucked away behind a glass, and that the very fact that she has but to stretch out her hand and grasp a volume makes it seem more like an intimate friend. This may be a "sour grapes" philosophy, but it is a pleasant one.

There is a variety of opinion as to where the old-fashioned "center-table" should stand. I know it has been relegated to the corner in many homes, and when the living-room is small it is too cumbersome to look well in the middle of the apartment. But if one has a large room it is rather agreeable and convenient to have a center-table on which the reading lamp rests at night, and about which the family may group themselves to read, sew or write. It is a good place to put the latest magazines and the various books that are being read.

Another table that it would be well for the farmer's wife to introduce into her living-room,

if she has not already done so, is the afternoon tea-table. The pretty custom of serving tea and bread-and-butter to the chance caller, or to the members of one's own family, in the latter part of the afternoon, is well-nigh universal in the city. It makes a charming break in the long afternoon, and is a function that can be established with little trouble. On a small table in the corner of the room may stand several pretty cups and saucers, with teaspoons, a tea-pot, covered sugar-bowl, tea-cannister, and silver, nickel-plated, or copper tea-kettle with an alcohol lamp beneath. It is little trouble to carry the kettle to the kitchen and fill it with boiling water and to bring it back to the living-room with a small pitcher of cream, and half-a-dozen triangular sandwiches of bread-and-butter. Or, if one prefers, there may be a china cracker-jar on the little tea-table, and this does away with the necessity of carrying in bread-and-butter, as in this jar may be kept fancy biscuit or cookies. The making of the tea takes only five minutes, and promotes sociability.

Some housekeepers prefer arranging a large

tray with the tea-things as soon as the noon-day meal is over, and leaving it in the dining-room or pantry until it is needed. In this case, the tea may be made in the kitchen, and the tray bearing the articles that will be needed can be carried in and set on the small tea-table above mentioned, which can then be placed where one wishes. Or, in summer, the tea-tray can be taken to the veranda.

Perhaps, as the veranda is often the out-door living-room it may be well to include it in this chapter. Each year more people appreciate the benefit to be derived from out-door life, and the veranda grows in popularity. Once, it was merely a porch, supplied with chairs to be sure, but not particularly inviting to one who would lounge or read. We have changed all that. Now rugs of crex, matting, or other material that will not be injured by dampness, are spread on the veranda. Easy chairs of wicker or wood, painted, if you like, in colors to match the paint on the house, are placed invitingly about. A green wicker tea-table covered with a pretty cloth is in one corner, and is brought forward every afternoon, laden

with hot or iced tea, as the weather indicates. Screens, that can be raised or dropped at will, shield one from the afternoon sun. Porch cushions, covered with denim or turkey red, make attractive spots of color at the top of the steps. The frugal housewife will find this outdoor living-room a great saving to the inside one. That, of course, in Summer, must be kept shaded to exclude flies and to invite coolness. Outside, one may catch the wandering breeze, and do as one pleases.

A custom adopted by many country housekeepers is that of screening-in one end of the veranda and serving breakfast out there in warm weather. It is a delightful fashion. Never is the air purer or sweeter than in the early morning hours, and surely food eaten under those circumstances is especially good. A plain deal kitchen-table may be carried to the veranda the night before, and it can be quickly set in the morning. A large tray can be used to carry out the dishes. The dining-room need not be used for eating, therefore, until noon-time, an arrangement which keeps it cool, dark and free from flies. Some people

take, also, their evening meal on the piazza. If one has a simple supper at night, this is a good arrangement, but if one dines at night, it increases rather than diminishes labor in the house where the wife and mother does her own work.

CHAPTER VII

THE BEDROOM

The number of bedrooms occupied depends, of course, upon the size of the family,—for the farmer usually has a house of generous dimensions. I wish that each individual in each household in the country could have a separate bedroom for himself or herself. When one has once known the luxury of an unshared sleeping-apartment she is seldom willing to halve the comfort by dividing it with another. In the old days sisters occupied the same bed and room, and were satisfied, not knowing how much more luxurious they might be. One's very own room, ventilated to please one's self, furnished just as one wishes, with one's pet belongings arranged to suit one's own tastes; an entire bed in which one may pitch and toss, stretch and yawn, without the consciousness that another would-be sleeper is being annoyed,

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BED ROOM

—all of these are aids to happiness that are not to be despised.

It is needless to say in this enlightened day and generation that to sleep alone is much more hygienic than to occupy the same bed with another person. If, therefore, two members of the same family must occupy the same sleeping-room, insist on having two single beds for them. These can be placed side-by-side, if desired, or the width of the room can be between the sleepers.

The placing of the bed is a matter that receives little thought in some homes, but it is worthy of consideration. A bed that faces the window through which the morning light pours in is in a bad position for the sleeper's eyes. Many persons have severe headache when they sleep facing the light. Bunyan speaks in his great Allegory of a guest-chamber looking towards the East, "whose name was Peace." In this time and land some of us would call a chamber so situated, with the bed facing the window, by some other name than "Peace!"

Try to have the bed so placed that the morning light will not strike directly on the face of

the sleeper, and in such a position that the windows can be stretched wide at night without the occupant of the room lying in a draught. If this is not possible, provide a substantial folding screen, covered with a dark-green material, that can be placed around the bed.

For whatever the chamber lacks there must be ample ventilation. With every passing year we Americans appreciate more keenly that fresh air means health, and the absence of it disease. In thinking over the old times, when people slept in feather-beds, with closed windows, and, sometimes, a stove burning in the room, we wonder that our grandparents did not die of asphyxiation. They did have colds and coughs, and "galloping consumption," and for them all warm, unaired rooms were prescribed. I well remember the look of horror on the face of one old woman when she peeped into a room in which a pneumonia patient lay, and saw the windows in the adjoining apartment stretched wide open, and the doors of communication unclosed, so that the keen winter air filled the room.

"O, my dear!" she protested, "he will

breathe that cold air into his lungs, and it *will inflame them worse!*"

The fact that the patient recovered only convinced her that he did so in spite of gross mismanagement on the part of the modern physician.

I am sorry to say that in many farm-houses there still exists an unwholesome dread of what one doctor calls, with all reverence,—"God Almighty's fresh air." One window is lowered cautiously a half-inch from the top at night to admit ozone into a warm room in which two persons sleep. Let the house-mother insist upon a revolution in this matter. The warm weather is a good time to start the reform, and as winter approaches do not have the bedroom window shut at night. Gradually the inmates will become accustomed to the change, —always supposing that they are provided with an abundance of warm covers. Close the doors, so that the bed is not in the direct current of air. If one suffers with cold about the head, it is better to allow such an one to wrap the head in a loose woolen scarf than to shut out the fresh air.

Do I seem too much of an enthusiast in this matter? My excuse is that I have seen diseased lungs cured by this method, and delicate children, susceptible to colds and coughs, develop into sturdy youths under the fresh air treatment.

Speaking of bed-clothing reminds me to put in a plea for covers that combine lightness with warmth. Avoid the heavy "comfortable,"—(a travesty on the name it bears) that weighs down the sleeper, and oppresses him. Use in its stead what are known as "duvets" of light-weight cheese-cloth, tufted or quilted to suit one's taste. These may be filled with down, or even with a soft and light-weight cotton batting. One made of cardinal red cheese-cloth, tufted here and there with knots of baby-ribbon of the same color, and bound with wide cardinal ribbon, is pretty and looks warm. If one prefers lighter and daintier colors, cheese-cloth in beautiful shades may be found, and is very cheap.

It is well to have a set of winter blankets, and thinner ones for summer use. I have never seen any reason for having the summer blan-

kets doubled. For that matter, winter blankets are more easily handled if they are single instead of double. The housekeeper may change these herself, by cutting them in half, and binding the raw edges. The double-blankets are difficult to shake out, are heavy to lift, and have a way of getting folded unevenly, so that the lower one is some inches shorter than the upper.

I wish all housekeepers could afford linen sheets for hot weather, but they are expensive, and those of fine muslin are excellent substitutes. If, however, you are so fortunate as to be the owner of linen sheets, be stingy with them. I say this with all seriousness, for the average child does not know linen from cotton, and will be just as careless with one as with the other. In case one of the youngsters is ill and feverish, the linen will feel grateful to his heated body. Otherwise save such sheets for the use of guests and "grown-ups" in the heated term.

With pillow-slips the case is rather different, for linen certainly is more pleasant against the cheek than muslin. But very fine cambric

pillow-slips are soft and pleasant to the skin.

In this day of single beds bolsters are out of fashion. It is fortunate for the bed-maker that this is true, for to slip a plethoric bolster into a rather scant slip is no easy task. Now each single bed is provided with two night-pillows, and some pairs of these have been made by cutting the unwieldy bolster in half.

Pillow shams are not as fashionable as of old, and many housekeepers use in their place "day-pillows" which are removed at night with the day-counterpane. This is really an excellent custom, for the bed will look fresh and dainty all the week. The elaborate lace and satin bed and pillow-covers detract, to my way of thinking, from the pure daintiness of the bed's appearance, but that is, of course, merely a matter of personal preference. There should be on the bed a counterpane that can be removed at night, when one of dimity or other light and easily-washed material is put on in its place. The day-covering can be carefully folded and laid aside with the day-pillows until the morning.

Each bed should have a mattress-cover to

protect the ticking from dust and dirt, and to make the sheet lie smoothly. At one time felt, or an old blanket, was used for this purpose. Now one can get at small cost regular quilted cotton mattress-covers.

The day of the feather bed is almost past. In some country-places one still finds these once highly-prized possessions, and I have sometimes wondered if, on bitter winter nights, they might not feel rather pleasant in an unheated room. But this is not a hygienic thought, so we will dismiss it as an evidence of my ignorance,—for I have never slept in a feather bed. I have, however, lain on a hair mattress on top of one of feathers, and it was most comfortable. It is well that the feather bed has been banished,—setting aside the question as to whether it was good for the sleeper or not,—for great care was required to keep such beds in a fresh, sweet condition, and many sunnings and airings were necessary to prevent a close musty odor from clinging to them.

The average maid does not know how to make a bed. She has the idea prevalent in her class that "anyone can do that," whereas it

takes brains to do it properly. It is so often improperly done that I would like to give minute directions to my reader, although she probably knows all about it. But she may sometime have a maid who does not, and she can show her this paragraph. Naturally, the first step towards performing the task thoroughly must be taken by the occupant of the bed. On arising, she should strip the covers from the bed and hang them over the footboard and a chair placed near it, so that they do not rest on the floor. She should remove the pillows, and turn back the mattress, that the air may reach every part of it. On leaving her room, the windows must be set wide open. After the "airing" period,—lasting at least an hour,—is over, the covers must be placed on a chair and the mattress turned. On a single bed this is not a difficult task, but a double-bed mattress should be divided into sections, so that it can be lifted without too much strain on the back and arms. The mattress-cover is then put on, and pulled smooth. After that comes the lower sheet, and upon the proper adjustment of this much of the comfort of the

bed depends. Lift the lower end of the mattress and fold the bottom of the sheet under it, so that it cannot slip up. Go to the head of the bed and do the same with the upper end of the sheet at the top of the mattress. Now tuck in the sides of the sheet, pulling it so smooth that there remains not the shadow of a crease in the whole expanse. Put the upper sheet on smoothly, and tuck it and the blankets in at the foot firmly, that there may be no chance of their "working up" during the night. (One who does not know the misery of coverings that part company with the foot of the bed, and leave one's feet uncovered, may smile at the above warning.) Now put on the counterpane, but do not tuck this in so tightly that its removal at bed-time will loosen the other covers. Fold the top of the upper sheet over the blankets, and fold the top of the counterpane over all. Stand the pillows up against the head-board, or lay them flat, as you prefer. If there is a *duvet,* fold it, and lay it over the foot of the bed. The whole creation, when complete, should be smooth, spotless and dainty.

There has been a good deal of discussion among housewives as to the frequency with which sheets should be changed. I was much amused at hearing a dear woman exclaim some years ago:

"O, dear! I would like to be Queen Victoria! I suppose a queen can have clean sheets *every* night, can't she?"

To her mind all the pomp, ceremony and wealth of royalty faded into insignificance compared with the luxury of being able to sleep in fresh sheets every night and not count the cost!

As a rule, once a week is often enough to change the sheets. Of course in case of illness, they must be renewed much oftener. In homes where expense is no consideration one can follow her Queen Victoria-like tendencies. But the housekeeper of moderate means cannot be so extravagant.

The furnishings of the bedroom may be as simple or as elegant as one's purse will permit and one's fancy dictates. I would, however, suggest that heavy woolen draperies, thick carpets, etc., be excluded from the bed-

chamber. Have at the windows muslin curtains that will not be injured by the ventilation-processes I have advocated. They should be of a material that can be washed and ironed frequently. A bare floor, polished, with rugs laid upon it, is ideal for the sleeping apartments. If this is not practicable, have a good matting and rugs. Do not get a cheap matting. It splinters off and has a surprising faculty for running with needle-like sharpness into bare feet.

The room must be brushed up and carefully dusted each morning. The washstand must never be neglected, whether it be a stationary one with running water, or that which is oftener found in country houses, the old-fashioned, but very comfortable, stand of wood with china toilet-set. The pitchers must be emptied, washed out and refilled with fresh water daily; the bowl must be scrubbed with hot water and soap and a little ammonia, to remove the ring of grease that accumulates within it in a mortifyingly short time. The soap-dish will require a daily washing at least, and there is no receptacle more often neglected

than this same soap-dish. The soap and dirt combine to make it a very unsightly object unless cared for often. The slops should be emptied, and the receptacles that held them scalded out with boiling water and washing-soda. When practicable, set them in the sun, uncovered, for an hour every two or three days. The top of the washstand, if of wood, must be covered with a plain white cloth. If the top is of marble, it need not be covered, unless one wishes. Soiled towels are removed and hung where they will dry before being consigned to the soiled clothes hamper; the clean towels are hung neatly on the towel-rack, and the wet wash-cloths laid in the sun to dry.

As one must sit much in one's room if she would have the solitude which all crave sometimes, there should always be one or two comfortable chairs in each chamber. Here, also, one may use her ingenuity in arranging tasteful contrivances for her use,—a pretty dressing table, a dainty shirt-waist-box, and the many things that make for beauty and for a woman's or man's comfort.

To a man his bedroom is, as a rule, but a

place to sleep and dress. But to a woman it is often bedroom and boudoir combined.

In calling on a friend who is an excellent manager and housekeeper, I was asked to go up and look at her bedroom which she had been refurnishing. The prevailing color was pink, and as hers was not a sunny room she was not afraid to use the rather perishable tint. The counterpane was one of the flowered dimity spreads so popular at present, and the design was wild roses on a white ground. Washable rugs of pink-and-white lay on the polished floor, and the simple white curtains were tied back with rose-colored ribbons.

But what impressed me most was the dressing-table. The clumsy bureau had disappeared, and in its place stood a delicate creation of rose and white. Being of an inquisitive turn of mind, and also an intimate friend of my hostess, I studied the pretty innovation until I learned how it was made.

A semicircular board on four upright legs formed the rude foundation. This was placed against the wall. On the table-top was smoothly tacked pink silesia covered with dot-

ted Swiss muslin, and a flounce or curtain of the same fell to the floor, hiding the unsightly legs.

"I may remark, in passing, that this is my shoe-box," said my friend, lifting the valance and revealing a row of shoes neatly ranged on the floor. "I had a shoe-bag nailed on my closet door, but it was forever becoming top-heavy and spilling its contents. This is far more convenient."

About four feet above the table-top a stout hook had been fastened in the wall, and, from this, curtains of the dotted muslin lined with pink hung behind and at the sides of the table, and reached to the floor. A huge bow of pink ribbon caught them to the hook, and knots of the same tied them back at each side. The pin-cushion and bureau scarf were of pink muslin covered with white dotted Swiss muslin.

"But," I asked, "how do you manage to get on without your bureau-drawers?"

She led the way to her closet. At one end had been a recess which was now filled with three deep drawers made by the handy carpenter who had constructed the table-top and legs.

These held what had been the contents of the banished bureau. As the drawers took up some of the hanging-space in the closet my friend had made the deficiency good by having two rows of double clothes-hooks screwed into the bottom of the closet shelf, thus making it possible to suspend two lines of gowns where heretofore there had been room for only one row.

"Now," said the clever little woman, "I must show you where I have put that big old bureau which I disliked having in my room."

She took me into the bathroom, and there stood the old-fashioned piece of furniture, covered with a spotless scarf, and with brush, comb and hand-glass laid upon it, "so that when the children rush in here to wash for dinner, they will be reminded to brush their hair and straighten their neck-gear."

And what impressed me as the greatest triumph of all, the soiled-clothes hamper had vanished, and its contents had been transferred to bureau-drawers. The bottom drawer was for the bed-clothes, the next for the woolens, the third for the starched pieces, and the top and

most shallow contained soiled handkerchiefs, collars and cuffs.

While each household is supplied with a soiled-clothes hamper,—unless one has some such device as that adopted by my friend,—still it is well to keep in the bedroom closet a bag for the soiled handkerchiefs and for the collars and cuffs. I do not, however, especially advocate a shoe-bag. My experience, like that of the housewife I have just quoted, has been that the average shoe-bag has a way of getting top-heavy and emptying its contents upon the floor beneath it. To keep shoes in good shape shoe-trees are needed, and these simply *will not* stay in the bag-pockets. Therefore I have found no better place for shoes than the floor of the bedroom closet. Arranged here in orderly rows, they are out of the way, and yet accessible.

One cannot deal with cleanliness in every particular in the bedroom without touching on the chance of the housewife finding at some time in her career that horror of all her kind,—the creature named by fastidious persons with bated breath and under some such euphonious

title as "scarlet runner," "crimson rambler," or "B. B." Whatever he is called, and wherever he is found, he is always that most odious of insects, a Bed-Bug. We may change his name, and speak of him in whispers, but that does not change his nature nor the fact that, to quote the slang of the day, he "gets there" occasionally in spite of all our efforts. Not that he is indigenous to the well-kept home,—perish the thought!—but that he is brought there in any one of a dozen unexpected ways. A laundress or other employee from an unclean home, the village carpenter, or plumber, may bring him to your spotless abode; he may come by express in a parcel of dry-goods from town,—for he often lurks in bales of muslin,—or you or a member of your family may, unconsciously, acquire his company on train or boat. In fact, his modes of transportation are so numerous, and his habits so persistent, that the wonder is we escape him as often as we do. But when he comes, he comes to stay if he possibly can. Race suicide is not in his line, and his kind multiply with terrifying rapidity. I know of no other minor trouble that depresses the

housekeeper as does the knowledge that she has harbored in her home for an hour the loathsome pest. For he is not easily routed, and the price of immunity from such vermin is eternal vigilance. Leave the creatures alone for a week after they have found a niche in which to hide, and you will have to work for many weeks before you can be sure that you have banished them. Even then there is always the possibility that behind picture-moulding or base-board there may remain a few eggs which in the future will mean consternation to your housewifely mind.

So, whether you have ever seen any of the vermin in your house or not, keep a keen eye open for them. If you find that they have gotten into rooms or furniture, attack them vigorously, but not despairingly, for they can be destroyed. One of the best preparations for ridding a bed or other piece of furniture of them is a mixture made of a pint of wood alcohol, a pint of turpentine, an ounce of gum camphor and an ounce of bichloride of mercury. Shake the mixture until the mercury and camphor are dissolved. Cover your hands with thick rub-

ber gloves, as the preparation will corrode the flesh and cause it to smart. Pour the liquid into a long-nozzled oil-can and inject it into every crack and crevice of the infested article. This mixture is a deadly poison, so keep it out of the reach of children and pet animals.

Another remedy for the vermin is gasoline. This can be used freely, as it does not stain the most delicate wall-paper or injure any fabric. If you have found bugs in your bedroom, remove all the clothes from bed and closets, and, after examining them carefully, shake and brush them out-of-doors and leave them in the sun and air. Examine the mattress, especially the corners and tuftings and binding. If your bed is of iron enameled, or of brass, you should have no trouble in keeping it clean. Apply the gasoline to all the corners and joints, and pour it freely into the folds and tufted parts of the mattress. Inject it behind picture moulding and base-board, and into the cracks of the furniture. Do all this in broad daylight, and have no fire or artificial light in the room when using the gasoline. Now close doors and windows tightly and leave the room

closed for twenty-four hours, if possible. After which air and sweep, burning all the dust gathered. It is well to apply the gasoline to any suspected places each week until you are certain you have banished the intruders, root and branch.

In crowded apartment-houses in the city immunity from these pests means constant suspicion and periodical applications of gasoline, as a preventive measure. But in the country or farm-house, one may fight them with a certainty of winning the battle in the long run.

The other pest which invades the country bedroom,—one that seems very innocent compared with the enemy we have just discussed, is the mosquito. There are preparations that are supposed to keep him away, pastilles which one may burn in the hope of smothering the insects, and washes which are supposed, because of their odor, to banish them. I would like to be able to say that I have seen these remedies rid a room of mosquitoes, but I have washed face and hands in various liquids, and burned pastilles until I, myself, have coughed and choked, then, after putting out the light, have heard the

mosquitoes recommence their serenade about my prostrate form with a persistency worthy of a better cause. I advise the housewife, unless she knows of some remedies better than those I have tried, to put her faith in well-screened windows, and to insist that no bright light shall burn in the bedrooms in the evening while the mosquito-season lasts.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GUEST-CHAMBER

THERE should be a guest-chamber in each house,—especially in each country house. The gracious old-fashioned hospitality is, I regret to say, going out of fashion. We have put in its place a kind of hospitality-by-contract substitute which does not satisfy our hearts. In the city there may be excuse for this,—in fact, unless one entertains friends at teas, receptions, etc., there is no way of fulfilling her social obligations. And in the average city apartment there is no room that can be spared for a guest-chamber. So one can seldom have a friend come and pay a visit of any length.

But in the farm-house the case is, and should be, different. Even here, the hostess must draw a line, and try to distinguish between the guest who comes because she is a friend and loves one and one's home, and the visitor who

BED ROOM

finds that home a pleasant place to stay when she needs country air and would save board. Do not extend a cordial invitation to such an one. She is not worthy of your hospitality.

But for the friend of your heart, have a room always ready. I do not advocate keeping the choicest apartment in the house for the guest-chamber, for I feel that the people who use the rooms most should have the pleasantest rooms. But, on the other hand, I do disapprove of putting a guest in a chamber that is so dark, or so cold, or so hot, that no member of the family would be willing to occupy it. I recall a handsome home in which the guest-room was on the north side of the house, and was never comfortably warm from December to April. In this sumptuously furnished room there was a stationary washstand, but because of some flaw in the plumbing cold water ran from both faucets, and the guest, whose only comfortable moments spent in this room were when she was in bed, could not have the luxury of relieving chilled fingers by plunging them in warm water.

To invite a friend to one's house and put her in such a cold storage compartment as the one

I have described is inhospitable. If you have no warm room for her, then do not ask her to come until after the cold season is well over. But, when the summer arrives, do not put a guest in the one bedroom that is directly above the kitchen!

Perhaps the country-dweller hardly appreciates what her hospitality means to the friend who dwells in the midst of the noise and turmoil of the city. Some years ago I was obliged to spend the first Summer months in town, and it so chanced that the weather during that period did its worst so far as heat was concerned. Heretofore I had spent all of the heated season in the mountains or by the sea-shore, and to my weary senses the days and nights were one round of noise, heat and dust. Then a friend wrote to me from her country-home,—"Come to us long enough to breathe and rest."

Shall I ever forget the sensuous joy of that little visit, or the blessed peace of that first evening on the dark veranda when I was satisfied to sit still and "listen to the silence" broken only by the delicious sounds of the Summer night! It was like a cool hand laid on

a throbbing pain. I look back now to those two days spent in that simple country home as to one of the resting-spots in a busy life.

And yet there were, apparently, no special preparations made for me. To be sure, I was met at the station by my cordial host, and the welcome that awaited me at the farm-house door was in itself compensation for the hot and dusty journey. My room was dainty with white curtains and fresh pillows, spotless counterpane, and many inviting linen towels. On the bureau was a vase holding a cluster of my favorite flowers. But there was nothing elaborate, yet, when my hostess had left me to wash off the dirt of travel, and I had plunged face and arms in the cool water that I was sure had been put into the pitcher within the past hour, I drew a long breath and looked about me, whispering over and over,—"Delicious! delicious!"

It was a simple farm-house, and a plain, quiet little room. To my weary self it meant a peace and happiness that I could not have found in the palace of a multi-millionaire.

So to my country reader I would urge that what your guests want when they come to you

is just what you, and you only, can give them, —that is, your heart-felt welcome and your home in its natural state. They do not want elaborate preparations, with a disarrangement of your usual mode of living. Take them simply and cordially into your home-life.

But to return to the guest-room. Have it opened and aired every few days even when it is unoccupied, that there may be no close and musty odor about it. Be sure that all the appointments are as comfortable as your purse can make them. Have two single beds, if this is your only spare room. Even if you expect but one guest, have both beds made up, as the effect of an unmade bed is always that of untidiness. When the room is not in use, throw a large sheet of unbleached muslin over each bed to exclude the dust, and have other articles of furniture similarly covered. If your chairs are upholstered, or cushioned, provide pretty slips of green-and-white, or other cool-looking cretonne, for summer use. These always give a fresh appearance to a room in hot weather, and can be removed for the winter.

Do not allow the drawers of the bureau in

this room to be the receptacles for the "best clothes" or other articles belonging to the family, unless you are willing to go to the bother of removing all of these things when you expect company. And do not have the closet filled with your own or your daughters' dresses. A visitor should find drawers empty and waiting to receive her belongings, and an abundance of unused hooks in a closet which she can appropriate for her clothing.

If possible, have a writing desk in this apartment. Fit it out with ink, pens, blotters, paper, envelopes and stamps. If you have not a desk to spare, substitute for it a table, and put the above-mentioned articles in the drawer.

Provide an easy chair or a rocker for your guest. It gives one a "homey" feeling to see a place where she may sit and read.

And be sure to have a book-shelf, or a table on which are a variety of books. A young girl-friend of mine returned home after a visit of several days to a handsome city home. She said the house was beautiful, but her hostess was taken ill on the evening of her arrival, and she, herself, had been cruelly homesick. Her

mother expressed surprise at this statement:

"You, Dorothy, homesick! Why, I am astonished, for you are always the kind of a girl who is happy when left to yourself with some books to read."

"Ah," said the daughter, "that was just where the trouble lay! In all that beautiful house there was actually not a book! My hostess cares nothing for reading, and her husband is too busy to look at any literature except the daily paper. I was thrown back upon myself, and when, after wandering through the house, I found nothing to read,—not even a Bible in my own room—I felt as if I were stranded on a desert island. Were you ever,"—turning to me,—"in a house where there was not a book of any description? If not, you do not know what loneliness means."

I do not want to know. To those of us who have lived among books and who love them, the very sight of their bindings and titles makes us feel as if we had silent friends and acquaintances even amid unfamiliar surroundings. Have some of these quiet comforters within

reach of your guest when she is alone in her room.

A pretty custom is to choose one flower with which to decorate your guest-room and adhere to this scheme in all the furnishings. As an illustration I would like to describe a spare chamber which was arranged to suit the ideas of a hostess with whom hospitality is a part of her sweet and gracious self.

The flower she chose was the violet, and the room in her country-home in which she put her friends was a symphony in color. The wall paper was of a delicate pearl-gray ground with violets in various positions strewn thickly over it. The carpet was of a dull green that accorded well with the green violet-leaves dropped here and there among the blossoms on the walls. The hangings were of cretonne covered with clusters of violets and their leaves; the same flowers were embroidered in white on the linen pillow slips. The *duvet* laid across the foot of the bed was of China silk, in the same design as the cretonne on the upper side, while the under side was pale purple

in color. The china toilet set was sprinkled with the favorite flower, the towels were bordered with a violet-design, the chairs were covered with cretonne like the hangings, and the bureau-scarf and pin cushion were of the finest linen exquisitely embroidered in shaded violet silks. As long as violets were in season a little vase of them was on the bureau to greet the guest who was so fortunate as to arrive in this ideal home. The furnishings I have described were not costly, the room itself was nothing unusual in the way of size, shape or beauty, but it was the thought of the gracious hostess which had made it lovely. In fact, she had put some of her own beautiful thoughts into her preparations for the friends she hoped to receive into her home.

The idea of giving of one's best to a guest is a proper one. Not, as I have said elsewhere, that one should change one's scheme of living for the visitor, but that one should always have ready a welcome and a pleasant place for the guest one delights to honor.

The personal touch will mean much to the friend you are expecting. On the day of her

arrival put the room in order, making the bed with your finest sheets and pillow-slips, and covering it with the daintiest counterpane. Fill the pitcher,—after washing it thoroughly, —with fresh water, inspect all the toilet articles, especially the soap-cup,—to be sure that no dust adheres to them, put a pretty bureau-scarf on the bureau, and place in attractive array hand-glass, brush and comb, and the other toilet requisites that belong there. If "thoughts are things" your friend will rest all the more sweetly in the room because you, who love her, made it ready for her occupancy.

When you have a guest, steal away at twilight, or let one of your daughters do so, long enough to take from the bed the dainty day-covering and put on a dimity night-spread. Open the bed, turning the covers half-down, close the shutters and bring in fresh water. See that a candle in a pretty candle-stick with a box of matches is on the little table at the head of the bed, and when your guest goes to her room for the night arrange to have a small pitcher of iced water, with a glass by it, set on her washstand.

CHAPTER IX

THE NURSERY

I TAKE it for granted that the housewife for whom these chapters are written has children. I hope she has, and as the wish is father to the thought, I believe that she is a happy mother. As one, she appreciates to the full the necessity that the youngsters shall have a room of their own in which they can play and feel that they are "monarchs of all they survey."

If there are several children the room we are now to deal with should be a large one. It must also be bright and cheerful. Unfortunately, the ideal nursery is not found in every home. In the city, one cannot have such an one as one wants. But in God's own country, where space is not limited by brick walls on either side, and one's house has many rooms and several stories, one can forget the limitations of what the apartment-dweller knows as

the "seven-room-and-a-bath-restrictions," and can have a genuine and satisfactory nursery for the small boys and girls. This room is, of course, designed especially for the very small children. The older ones may have rooms of their own. But before they cease to be the "little ones" of the flock, they must have a domain suited to their needs.

Too often the nursery is, at best, but a playroom for the babies, so barely and so plainly furnished that one could hardly blame the small inmates if they occasionally showed signs of discontent and crept away to the more attractive apartments of their elders. Grown people do not seem to appreciate that it makes much difference to the small boy or girl what his or her surroundings are, so long as the bodily comforts are not lacking, and some form of amusement is provided. This is a fallacy in most cases, and it casts a certain discredit upon the parents if the children have not been trained to like pretty things, to prefer an orderly room to a disorderly one, to enjoy those objects which appeal to a love of the beautiful. From babyhood children can be trained to ap-

preciate articles which are in good taste, and if the nursery in which most of their hours indoors are spent is what it should be, this appreciation of the fitness of things can be unconsciously cultivated.

But before we treat the matter of nursery decoration, let us turn our attention to the hygienic conditions of the room. First of all must be taken into consideration the amount of sunshine it receives. If no other room in the house is provided with the life-preserving, health-producing sunlight, the nursery must be. The child's physical as well as his mental welfare demands sunshine. During the winter there are sure to be many days when the younger members of the family must be closely housed. The nursery must admit some such sunshine as they revel in during the more kindly months when they can be out-of-doors through long golden days.

Many farm-houses are now supplied with a hot air, or steam, or hot water heating apparatus. In such homes it is easy to regulate the atmosphere of the children's room. But in the country there are some homes in which the

rooms are all warmed by stoves. If properly managed these stoves are admirable in their way,—that is, if they are not allowed to over-heat the various rooms. In spite of the fact that we Americans are surely,—although very slowly,—learning the evils of over-heated homes, there are still farm-houses in which the over-fed, iron, oxygen-destroying monster holds absolute sway. Some years ago I entered the sick-room of a child in a stove-ruled home. The night was cold, and the child's crib was close by the reddened stove. The mother explained to me that her small daughter was susceptible to cold, and on that account she was never allowed to sleep far from the fire.

"But," declared the perplexed parent, "she catches cold whenever I let her go out-of-doors."

At that moment the oppressed lungs were struggling in the over-heated atmosphere and the needed rest was broken by the uncomfortable heat of the room. There was no use in my attempting to explain this fact to the ignorant mother. The child was hers,—so was the stove. If she chose to have them meet to-

gether, and all but kiss each other, it was none of my business. We would-be reformers of well-meaning and self-satisfied parents soon learn the uselessness of interfering in such a state of affairs as I have just described. Our comfort must lie in the hope that the special Providence that is purported to look after the lame and the lazy may extend its care to all classes. Certain it is that children of ignorant parents grow up in spite of lack of ventilation, food unsuited to their needs, and other atrocities prevalent in their homes. Perhaps it is well for us that we do not stop to inquire too particularly into the physique and health of the men and women which these children become. In this case ignorance is bliss.

But to return to our muttons—or to our lambs—in the well-regulated household. Here the nursery is heated,—not over-heated,—and the temperature is properly restrained. The thermometer hovers between sixty-five and seventy, with a preference for the lower figure. Children are active little creatures and should not play in a room where the thermometer rises above sixty-five, as ex-

ercise causes them to become over-heated. Several times during the day turn the youngsters out of the room, and open all the windows for ten minutes. As soon as it is again comfortably warm the children may return to the purified and freshened atmosphere. Hang the thermometer about six feet from the floor and not near the windows or heater. It must always be remembered that there is a draught close to the floor, and that here the temperature is certain to be lower than it is a few feet higher up. The small child sits on the floor to play, and, as this is unavoidable, have really good weather-stripping securely fastened across the bottoms of the doors and at the bottoms and sides of the windows. If one's purse permits, it is an excellent plan to have double-windows in the nursery during the winter months. The children delight in standing close to the panes, gazing out into the frost-bound air from which they are debarred. Double-windows and weather-strips lessen the chances of cold from this much-enjoyed practice. In summer the danger to be feared from the ever-attractive windows is the fascination

for the youngster in leaning as far out as possible to acquaint himself with exactly what is going on in the bit of ground immediately beneath him. For the child's safety, and for the mother's peace of mind, a guard of some kind is necessary, and a light, but strong, iron railing is advisable for this purpose, as it makes falling out impossible, and yet does not obstruct the view.

The proper shades for the nursery windows are dark green in color, for those next to the glass, although white ones may be used towards the room. The green shades are essential, as, when drawn down, they will admit no light to the sensitive eyes of the youthful sleepers. Some mothers do not appreciate the injury that may be inflicted upon the eyes of a young child by the light shining upon them during sleep. The nursery should, therefore, be dark until the babies awake in the morning, and deeply shaded while they take their noon-day nap. Do not have long window-hangings in this room. They are out of place here, as they gather dust, and are constantly tripping the little feet that trot to and from the windows. Muslin sash-

curtains are the only draperies necessary. If run upon small brass rods, they slip back and forth easily, make a pretty finish for the windows, and may be removed and laundered whenever they are soiled. Cross-barred or dotted muslin at twenty-five cents a yard will prove entirely satisfactory for this purpose, and two yards will make a pair of sash-curtains for a large window.

The wall-covering for the nursery may be a pretty paper, and there are nursery-papers that are charming in design. Personally, however, I would advise that the side-walls be finished with a hard paint. Paper tears easily, collects dust and germs, and, worst of all, cannot be thoroughly cleansed. One can get a pretty shade of paint, a good buff, or gray, or if desired a light blue. If one prefers dark colors, they can be bought, but a nursery should not be somber in effect. The painted side-walls can be finished at the top, next to the ceiling, with any one of the attractive nursery-paper-borders so fashionable nowadays. One I saw recently bore pictures of the various Noah's Ark animals, marching along in pairs.

Another had fascinating Kate Greenaway pictures. Put such a border on the painted walls and the result will be excellent. Then if the little hands are sticky or dirty and leave marks on the painted surface, these marks can be scrubbed or washed off, whereas a delicate paper would be spoiled.

Stain the floor,—unless it is of hard wood. A large rug made of ingrain carpet, or of Brussels in soft, unremarkable shades and designs, may be used. Some mothers insist upon rugs, others upon carpets, while others claim that matting is "the only wear." I would here protest against this last-named floor-covering in the nursery, and I speak from experience. I was once persuaded to lay a straw matting in my own babies' nursery. A friend advised this, saying that it was "cool and clean for the hot weather." It was put down in May. By the first of July the patter of small feet back and forth over it had broken some of the strands of fine straw, and the chubby knees of my creeping baby had each night upon their rotund surfaces a plentiful crop of splinters and slivers. The little ones would run over

the floor on warm nights and mornings, without waiting to don bed-side slippers, and frequent were the exclamations of pain as the sharp points of the broken straws ran into the tender flesh. Mother and nurse became adepts in removing splinters, and both they and the little sufferers were glad when the Autumn came, and with it another floor-covering.

The great objection brought against a carpet is that it is not hygienic, and its opponents have much that is right on their side. It has, however, the advantage of warmth. A rug has a tendency to trip the child as he rushes across it, and, as one youngster complains, it is "all the time kicking up around the edges." One mother has a good scheme. She lays upon her nursery floor a large rug lined with coarse flannel, that it may be thick and warm, and this rug reaches almost to the wall all about the room. At each corner and at the middle of each side it is fastened to the floor by a long "thumb tack." These tacks hold it in place, while the rug is too near the walls for anyone to catch his foot in the edge. When desired the tacks may be easily drawn out and the rug

thoroughly beaten and shaken in the outer air.

It is a mistake to have the covering that is upon the floor of this combination playroom and nursery so handsome that the mother dreads to have the little feet wear it out, or so costly that she will be distressed when she hears that Bobby has upset the glass of paint-water, or Nelly overturned the jar of flour paste upon it. While the children should be taught to be careful, accidents will occur, and even big people sometimes upset things that do more damage than paint-water or paste, and are not so easily washed out.

I would suggest that, if it is possible to have the washstand and toilet set elsewhere than in the nursery, it be excluded from this apartment. If one have a wash-closet or bathroom opening from this room she is fortunate. The china bowl, pitcher and slop jar are either a great restraint upon childish frolics, or they stand a good chance of having to be replaced several times during the year by new ones, as they are pretty sure to come to grief sooner or later. Then, too, the water has a most uncomfortable way of spilling at the most inopportune mo-

ments. Therefore, if possible, eliminate the washstand from the scheme of nursery furnishing.

One cannot always afford to buy one of the low bureaux that come especially for the small child. So, as in many cases where one has no more money than she needs, one must make the best of what she has. A chiffonier that is shabby can be scraped down and painted with white enamel paint, the drawers furnished with brass handles, and the whole affair made into a pretty receptacle for the children's clothing. I suggest a chiffonier, because it contains a greater number of drawers than does a bureau, and is consequently more convenient for stowing away the numerous articles of clothing of which the average small child is possessed. The mirror can be taken from this chiffonier, as it is entirely too high for use among the little ones, and it may be hung above a dressing table covered with pretty cretonne. On this dressing table may be laid the brushes, combs, powder-boxes, etc.

The children can and should be taught while still very young to keep their clothing properly

laid away where it belongs. Even if the mother has to rearrange, let the child think that he has the responsibility of putting away his own coat and hat, mittens, rubbers, and other pieces of wearing apparel. The mother may make a tour of inspection each day, and commend or censure as she finds order, or the reverse. In one family there is a system of marks, and there is among the children a weekly struggle to attain the high distinction of having no demerit marks for seven days. Each article of clothing found out of place means one of these objectionable marks. Each child that is old enough to run about has his own special bureau drawer. Since the plan in question was adopted the "bump" of neatness seems to have developed among the youngsters.

A large screen, such as the one mentioned in the chapter on The Bedroom, should be in the nursery, and can be put between the beds and the open window at night. It must have wide, heavy feet, that it may not tip or blow over easily, and can be covered with cretonne. During the daytime, or when not in use, it can be folded and set out of the way. The ideal bedstead

for the nursery is of brass, or, what is cheaper, and very pretty, of white enamel with brass trimmings. Where there are two children, have two single beds in preference to a double one. Viewed from a sentimental or poetical standpoint, there is something very pretty in the idea of the two rosy faces side-by-side on the snowy pillow, and of the chubby arms of one child about the neck of the other. But stern common sense and harsh experience have taught us that while sentiment is all very well it does not prevent a feverish cold from being infectious, or guard Willie from "catching" Johnnie's diphtheritic sore throat. When it is possible, children must occupy separate beds. Both will sleep the better for this arrangement. Each bed should be furnished with a good firm mattress, under which may go a spring bed. Springs add to the comfort of the sleeper, but I have known children who have never slept on them to slumber peacefully upon a thick mattress laid right on the bed-slats. Only one pillow,—and that not a large one—must be on each couch. A high pillow has a tendency to cause round shoulders. If a child has been

taught from birth to sleep without any pillow, he will, perhaps, be the better for the habit. If, however, the head is raised, let it be only a little way. Have the pillow thin, and covered with a fine cambric or linen slip. The bed clothes must be light, yet warm. Soft, fleecy blankets and down *duvets* are best for the little child.

While the crib with side-railings gives the mother of a restless child much peace of mind, these railings are not necessary and make a bed more expensive. It is marvelous how soon a mere baby learns not to roll too near the edge of his cot.

As to the chairs in this room, they can be of whatever pattern the mother chooses. But there should always be one comfortable rocker into which "mamma" may drop, and in which she may "cuddle" in her arms the hurt or weary child. While rocking a baby to sleep is a pernicious practice, the mother must sometimes allow herself the luxury of holding her little one for a few minutes in her arms, and telling it a story or talking to it the delicious nonsense dear to both. And in no other chair

can this be done so well as in a great big rocker. Nothing else takes its place.

"The Land of the Rocking-Chair!" How many of us recall it with a sigh that is almost a sob! When things go awry, and we are so weary that we feel that the grasshopper is a burden, do not many of us men and women wish we could be children again "just for to-night," and does not each of us recall a certain room in which, in the twilight or fire-light, a dear form sat in a big rocking-chair, and does not each of us remember the pressure of those arms about us, the gentle, swaying motion of the old chair, and the sound of the dear voice that had magic to charm away our childish troubles and bring back the laugh to baby lips?

One of the most perplexing questions with which the order-loving mother has to contend is to decide where to put the children's toys. If placed in the nursery-closet, they keep the floor in an unsightly litter and the dust gathers upon them, and under them. The most convenient device that I have ever seen for the disposal of playthings was a trunk-lounge,

seven feet in length, three feet wide, and three feet deep. To this was a hinged top. The box was covered with dark green reps, and on the lid was fitted and securely fastened a hair-mattress, also covered with green reps. Into this really ornamental piece of furniture the toys were stowed away at night, it being the children's duty to pick up everything off the floor and put it away in a neat and orderly manner. They became accustomed to this task and performed it with perfect cheerfulness and a delightfully pleasant conviction that they were "helping Mamma." Upon this same lounge there were several pillows of bright colors, and a folded afghan, and here the weary mother often snatched a twilight nap after "tucking in" the babies.

Make a point of having only good pictures upon the walls of the nursery. Chromos that are atrocious in color and design should be excluded. One may buy cheap engravings of really fine pictures that can be neatly and tastefully framed. Choose subjects that will interest the children and talk to them about them, and make them familiar with the names of the

artists. In this way, as well as in many others, the little ones will learn to observe, and will take in learning by absorption, unconsciously cultivating the eye as well as the intellect.

One other very necessary article of nursery furniture is a set of hanging book-shelves. These may be of pine, painted bright red, with black lines. On these go the favorite books of the little folk.

Against the wall under the book-rack can stand a small deal table, covered with a colored cloth when not in use. On this, when the cloth is removed, the children may "mess" with their paints, may paste and cut out pictures. As the table is plain and unvarnished, of the ordinary kitchen-type, it can be scrubbed as often as required and the youngsters can decorate picture-papers and make scrap-books without fear of spoiling nice furniture. On this table, at supper-time, may be laid a white cloth, and here the little children in the well-ordered household take their six o'clock supper.

This early and simple supper for the small children should be insisted upon by the wise mother. I cannot close this chapter which

deals with the nursery and its inmates without urging this plan upon my readers who are so fortunate as to be mothers. I would also urge them to give serious thought to the matter of the children's diet.

It is best for the child to learn from the first to eat his breakfast porridge with an abundance of milk, but with little, if any, sugar. Following this, let him have a soft-boiled or poached egg, varied occasionally by creamed or broiled fish or, if he digests it easily, a thin slice of crisp bacon. Of course other meat may sometimes be eaten in the morning, as may poultry also, but if the child is to have meat at the noonday meal it is quite unnecessary for breakfast. With the egg should be given delicately-browned toast, and in Winter a cup of hot cocoa. In Summer, milk is to be preferred to the warm beverage. When a hearty breakfast has been eaten, the child may have a ripe orange, peach or apple, and even grapes are to be allowed if the skins and seeds are conscientiously avoided.

The dinner for children under nine years of age should be at noon. As the repast is a sim-

ple one, it is not as much trouble as one might think, even in the home where the regular dinner is served at night. A bowl of broth from the dinner-supply of the evening before can be reserved for this noon-day meal, and it is not an arduous task to broil a tender steak or a few chops, and to bake potatoes or boil rice in the middle of the day. With these and a simple pudding the well-trained child will be satisfied.

Every dish should be daintily cooked and should be selected with an especial view to its nourishing qualities. The mother must plan so that the little folks have a constant variety and are never allowed to weary of any one dish. All pastries and fried foods and boiled puddings must be forbidden articles of diet for many years to come. An endless number of digestible and nourishing desserts can be prepared of rice, tapioca, hominy, macaroni, stale bread-crumbs, eggs and milk. Sponge cake with jam or jelly is nearly always a welcome sweet. When soup and meat are eaten at noon, milk as a beverage is unnecessary and the small child will be content with cold (not iced) water.

The scheme which I have advocated of hav-

ing the simple supper served at six o'clock in the nursery should commend itself to the busy house-wife. If her dining-room has been prepared for dinner, the table set, and all in readiness for the evening repast, she will find it a convenience to have the children's supper carried on a tray to the nursery and arranged there on the deal table above-mentioned. This supper must be a very simple affair but will, nevertheless, tax the ingenuity of the mother if she would have a varied menu and one that, because of this variety, will tempt the appetite. Try to have something different for each night in the week. A supper menu something like the following for one week would be palatable and nourishing:

Monday; rice and milk. Tuesday; bread and jam. Wednesday; cream toast. Thursday; bread and butter and stewed prunes. Friday; toast and apple sauce. Saturday; hominy and milk. Sunday; bread and butter, sponge cakes and fruit jelly.

With these repasts serve a pitcher of rich, sweet milk, insisting that the children sip it, instead of drinking it rapidly.

When the supper has been comfortably disposed of, the dishes may be carried down to be washed, the cloth removed and folded up, and the children's supper can be dismissed from the maternal mind. This plan is enjoyed by the little ones, and, by the time that the regular evening meal is ready, they are tucked safely in bed and asleep,—which is just what very little children need when night falls. To the weary mother there is a pleasant consciousness that she may linger as long as she likes over her supper or dinner, without any conscience-pricks or compunctions with regard to the babies, which would not be the case if, after her own meal, she must still undress them and put them to bed. For the comfort of all concerned, let the little ones have their supper in the nursery. At other meals they may be at the dining-room table with the "grown-ups."

While on the subject of the nursery and all that pertains to it, I would add that in Summer the children should not be encouraged to remain in this room during the day-light hours. At such times, the nursery is but a place in which they may sleep, dress and take one meal.

At other times let the little boys and girls live as much as possible out-of-doors. But make the nursery so attractive that when the stormy and cold days arrive the little shut-ins will feel that they have a lovely room of their very own, and not a gloomy prison in which they are confined.

CHAPTER X

THE BOYS' ROOM

THE room occupied by the half-grown, or nearly-grown lads of the household is a very different thing from the nursery in which the little brothers and sisters hold sway. I wish I could say that the average boy has an ideal room, but he has not. It is distressing to note in how many homes this apartment is a sort of catch-all for the furniture that is too shabby to be used in other parts of the house, and yet is so nearly good that it hurts the conscience of the frugal householder to throw it away or give it away. The bureau that, when bought, was an inferior article, and is now *minus* one caster and three drawer-knobs; the chairs with the broken rungs and rickety backs; the bed that "sags" in the middle; the pictures that are too ugly to be tolerated down-stairs,—often form a large part of the "boys' room."

Of course a lad is supposed to spend much of his day out of the house. From nine to twelve, and from one to three, he is off at school, and if he can spare the time from his studies he is away a great part of the afternoon, tramping the country, skating, shooting, or indulging in some open-air sport. But there are stormy days when he comes home as soon as school is over; there are many days in which his studies preclude the possibility of his staying away from home; and there are the long evenings in which he should be at home, and in which he wants occasionally to be alone to study or read. At such times he must be in his room. If it is shared with a brother near his own age, they will often rebel,—not in your hearing, perhaps, —at the "cast-offs" that you have seen fit to set up in their apartment. Or, worse still, they may become so accustomed to the shabby articles, or may care so little for their own room, that they will pay no attention to the fact of its unprepossessing appearance. When this time arrives, look well to the boys, for they are becoming weaned from the family life and the Home.

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LIVING ROOM

It is manifestly unfair for a lad to have a room of which he is so much ashamed that he hesitates to ask a friend to come into it. A young fellow likes to feel that he has a place, a nook, or corner, that is his very own. As your home is your castle, his room is his. It is your place to make it as attractive as your purse will permit, always bearing in mind the nature of the occupant of the apartment. Dainty coverings, delicate draperies and rose-colored curtains are not for him. Everything must be substantial, and not easily soiled. I regret to be obliged to record the fact that the average boy from ten to eighteen is not over-fond of cleanliness, and his hands are usually smutty, and his boots are often muddy. Moreover he has a way of tossing a dusty coat on his couch, a sweater on the bed, and a cap on the bureau, while the shoes go, to use his language, "in any old place" that happens to be convenient. If you are a wise mother you will train him in habits of neatness, but it will have to be line upon line, precept upon precept, and even then he will be more untidy than is his fastidious sister.

Select therefore for his room stout, durable articles. Get a plain iron, white enameled bed. If the paint gets scratched off, encourage him to re-paint the iron. He can do it, and will take pride in the job, if his room is attractive enough to make it worth while. A plain, but neat, set of book-shelves on which he can keep his best-loved books are necessary. These shelves may be made of pine, and stained. About eighteen inches below the ceiling,—less than that if the ceiling is low—have what is known as a "plate-rail," or a wide shelf to hold bits of bric-a-brac, or what pass for such with the boy; pictures, curios, etc. This shelf may be made of pine, and stained cherry or mahogany color. Every lad has "trophies" of some sort that he loves to set where they will show. Suppose he does bring home lumps of yellow fungus, and odd bits of rock, pine-cones and bird-nests;—if he wants them as ornaments (?) for his room, do not say him nay. Each of these cherished belongings causes his own abode to seem that much dearer to him, that much more his own.

Yes, I know all these things make what you call "a mess," but they also make for the love of Home, so let them pass. Visit the boy's room often, and show that you are interested in his various "collections."

Is there a normal boy who does not collect? And such a mass of various things compose what he calls his "curios!" One month it is post-cards, another pebbles, another horse-shoes and later coins. What mother of sons does not know about this kind of mania? In one household of boys there were started at various times collections of coins, stamps, monograms, shells, odd stones, inch-high tin toys, girls' handkerchiefs, photographs, birds'-nests, birds' eggs, beads, odd buttons, craw-fish and turtles! The devoted mother did not utter a word of protest until the entrance of the reptiles upon the scene. Then, even her maternal devotion was tried beyond endurance, and she suggested gently that the "poor little creatures would be very uncomfortable when deprived of the open air and free life." And, as she was usually so sympathetic with the joys of the

"collector" that she was "almost as good as a boy," her advice carried weight and the live stock was banished from the lads' room.

Have a good firm couch in this room. If you have not a trunk-lounge to spare, use a cheap cot,—but a strong one. Or on six uprights or staunch legs nail a board, or several boards side-by-side, to form a bench or couch of the width the boy wants. Cover this with a casing filled with hay, unless you have a small mattress that is not in use. Nail fast this improvised couch-cushion, and throw over all a bright-colored cover. Slumber-robes of gay hues, that are pretty and harmonious, can be bought for a dollar or two, and are very effective. Here lay several cushions with the kind of covers that the boy likes. If possible, have one made of his school-colors, another of his favorite college-colors. On the painted walls allow him to hang his rifle and pennants of various kinds. Across hooks can go his fishing-poles. You may not care for the effect, but he will. He will also delight in dashing pictures, and engravings of Frederic Remington's fa-

mous works will please him and cultivate his eye for really good drawing. If he wishes any hangings in the room, let him have fish-net curtains at the windows, and portieres of a denim that will correspond with the other colors in the room. I know of one room in which the young inmate rejoiced, for the decorations were of a vivid red that his soul loved. The walls were painted a light gray, but the curtains and portieres were of Turkey-red. The floor was stained a dark oak color, and the rugs on the floor had been made by the mother's own fingers. They were of turkey red, cut into strips and sewed together as our grandmothers used to sew carpet-rags. The village weaver wove them into round rugs. Turkey-red cushions were on the couch, and, while the bureau was dressed with a white scarf, the ends of this were outlined with red poppies done in silk, and a gorgeous red satin pin-cushion made a splash of color in the center of the white expanse. Every lad has a strain of the savage in his make-up, and the brilliant coloring satisfied that side of this particular boy's nature. As he

grew to be a man his tastes became more sober, but the red room of his boyhood was, in his eyes, a thing of beauty.

When you know what your son likes in the way of decoration, try to humor this liking, although it is not in accordance with your taste, —for lots of things that boys and men like we women do not care for. That does not alter the fact that they have a right to indulge a taste that is harmless and reasonable.

A trite statement is the one that declares that if one would keep a boy at home one must make home attractive. But it is so true that every mother should bear it in mind. If the average masculine is to stay in the house when time hangs on his hands, that house must be attractive. And in that house he must be allowed to find amusement of some sort. The best-trained young people are in certain ways like other young creatures, and they want fun, and will try to get it. It is as natural for them to seek an outlet for their active thoughts as it is for you to put into practice the work you have planned for each day. So the parent must let

the boy have some recreation that he loves at home.

If therefore your lad wants to learn to play the violin, and to practice ear-splitting strains in his own room, allow him to do it. Shut your door and your ears, if you can, but rejoice that you know where the lad is and what he is doing. If he brings friends home and they box or fence up in the "boys' room," it is proof positive that your son feels he has a right to do this in his own domain, and that his friends find that domain a pleasant place. Determine to smile and not frown at the sounds of laughter, perhaps of singing, and ask to be allowed to hear the latest record bought for the phonograph,—even if you do not like the phonograph itself. If it is the boy's, and it helps keep him at home, you should like it,—not for its sound, but for its effect.

In many homes there is a mistake made with regard to the sons of the family. This mistake lies in thinking that the girls should keep things in order, and that the boys have no responsibilities in that line. Train your boys to feel

that with them rests, to some extent, the duty of "straightening up" their room every day. Let the maid, or the mother or sisters, make the bed, empty the slops, and do the sweeping and dusting. But the boys should put away their clothes and shoes, hang up coats and hats, keep books and papers in order, and keep the closet and chiffonier-drawers neat. To allow a boy to throw clothing about his room, and have some woman pick it up for him, is to permit habits that will make him careless in greater matters and will lay many an extra burden on the shoulders of the wife he may some day have.

CHAPTER XI

THE BATH ROOM

I AM aware that there are farm-houses in which what are known as "modern improvements" are lacking. I am sorry that this is the case. One man has said that if he can have the luxuries of life he will dispense with the necessities. One is tempted to echo his speech when one thinks of living all the year around without a bath room,—a luxury that to the person accustomed to it seems a necessity.

And yet, even in the house where there is no running water, one may have an improvised bath-room on the first floor. With this let us deal for a moment before passing on to the house with plumbing and hot and cold water.

In one farm-house there is a little space partitioned off at the end of the long back veranda. A door leads into this from the back-hall of the house. This small room has been fitted out

plainly, almost rudely, with bath-room appliances. At one side of the room is a pump connected with a pipe from the well, and a small tank above it can be filled by using this hand-pump. Of course there is no warm water, but there are persons who like the cold plunge, and if one has energy enough to pump enough water for a bath one may have it. In winter, this room is almost useless, as to keep it warm enough to prevent the water or pipes freezing one must burn an oil stove in it day and night. But in summer one longs for the luxury of the plunge bath, and then this room can be used.

If one cannot have even this "near-luxury" there should be in every home a tin bath-tub large enough for a grown person to bathe in. This has to be filled by water carried from the kitchen stove and pump, but the person who loves bathing will go to all this exertion sooner than miss the joy of frequent ablutions. In such a case a clothes-boiler full of water should stand at the back of the range all the time, and must be replenished as soon as its contents become low.

While I have been writing about the impro-

vised bath-room, I have been hoping that the housekeeper who reads this book need not resort to the suggested expedient, but has a comfortable bath-room in her house. I am not exaggerating when I say that one might better economize on clothes than on this comfort. Farmers do not always appreciate this fact. I knew one well-to-do farmer, whose daughter and wife dressed handsomely, who gave this same wife and daughter expensive presents of jewelry and wearing apparel, who had a pair of handsome carriage horses and a stylish equipage, and yet would not have plumbing put into his house. His parents had never had it, why should he? Neither had his parents had the horse-rake, or the reaper, or the lawn-mower which was used daily on his farm. But it was useless to argue with him, and as long as he lived all the water needed in the bed-rooms was carried up by hand, while all the soiled water was carried down in the same way. Think of the strain on back and arms,—and all because running water in the house was considered an unnecessary expense!

Yes, if one has to do without some other

things, have a bath-room. The fixtures need not be of the most expensive style, but they should be serviceable. A porcelain-lined tub costs much less than an entire porcelain one, and when painted white on the outside looks nearly as well. If one has a wind-mill or an engine to pump water into the house, one is fortunate. If not, pay a boy a small sum every week to use the hand-pump (which fills the tank) for a fixed period of time each day. What that time will be must be determined by experiment. It should be long enough to ensure the tank-water lasting until the next pumping. One soon learns not to waste water under such conditions, and the country housewife is too careful to allow the precious fluid to run or drip from a forgotten tap, as her city sister does with impunity.

If you have one of the old-fashioned zinc-lined bath-tubs you must exercise great care in keeping it clean. It is not as easy to wash as is porcelain, and it is well to have a rule in the family that each person using the tub shall wash it out before leaving the room. For this purpose have behind the tub, out of sight, sev-

eral hooks on which hang cloths to be used in this cleansing process. A dish containing a scouring powder or soap may stand on the floor under or behind the tub. The bowl of the wash-stand, as well as that of the water-closet, must be washed out each day. For the latter, one may use a mop with a wooden stick, adding a little bi-chloride of lime to the rinsing water. This will keep the bowl white and clean. It is well to pour scalding water down all the pipes every two or three days,—oftener in warm weather.

Housewives sometimes complain of the dark ring that collects on the inside of the white tub, and that will not wash off with soap or hot water. To remove this, rub it well with kerosene, and leave the oil on for an hour, then run very hot water into the tub and scrub the kerosene off with a stiff brush dipped in whiting. The grease and dirt will come off together. The same treatment may be used to scour the wash-bowl.

Get a washable cotton rug for the bath-room floor. Hang above the tub a crash bath-mat to be laid upon this rug by the bather to pro-

tect it from the splashing of the water and from the bather's wet feet when he steps from the water. A rubber tube, with a rose-spray attached, should hang at the side of the tub that one may have the cold spray after a warm bath. Of course if one is so fortunate as to have a regular shower-bath attachment one can dispense with the adjustable spray.

If possible, have a glass shelf over the wash-stand. If not, have a narrow shelf of pine, and tack white oilcloth smoothly over this. On this shelf set the tooth-brush mugs, the glasses, and toilet-water bottles. It is well to keep a bottle of household ammonia in the room, as it is useful in cleansing toilet articles, and is also good as a disinfectant and purifier. Other fixtures, such as towel-rods, racks or rings, drinking-glass-racks, toilet-paper holder or case, etc., may be added as one wishes. These articles are usually of nickel, and one must wipe them off daily if she would have them keep their bright and clean appearance. The average maid will let them alone for a fortnight at a time, then will scour them with cleansing powders and wonder that they do not look bright. To wipe

them, and rub them briskly with flannel or chamois-skin for a moment each day, is the better plan.

Have a sash-curtain over the lower half of the window, run on a brass rod, so that it will slip easily back and forth. As the steam will injure or stain a delicate, or colored fabric, let this curtain be of plain white scrim with a little edging of braid or embroidery. It must be taken down and washed and ironed often to keep it white and stiff.

In ninety-nine out of a hundred households the medicine chest is kept in the bath-room. It is well to have this chest fitted with at least three shelves. The medicine cabinets with looking-glass doors are not expensive, and, if hung above the washstand, supply the double purpose of closet and mirror. In this cabinet it is well to have certain articles that may be called "staples" in the way of drugs or aids in case of illness. If one must keep poisons in the house,—let them be on the upper shelf of the cabinet, in a corner by themselves. On this shelf should also go the bottles and boxes containing articles that are used only externally,—

such as liniments, salves and ointments. If it is understood that there is not a remedy on the top shelf that is ever to be used internally, the danger of mistakes will be minimized. Even then, if there are in your family small children of an investigating turn of mind, put the poisons on the very top shelf of the highest closet that you have in your house.

What I have spoken of as "staples" are the remedies that the layman can use, and knows how to use, and which may correct minor ailments or accidents, or give relief until the doctor arrives. Such are paregoric, camphor, aromatic spirits of ammonia, Jamaica ginger, sweet spirits of nitre. For external application have on hand arnica, witch hazel, some good liniment, camphor ice and vaseline. To these may be added any remedies that you know from experience to be good. But if there are bottles whose contents you do not know, throw them out. After an illness in my own family I found stored away in my medicine cabinet no less than five partially-emptied bottles, bearing prescription-numbers, but giving no clue to what these prescriptions were nor what kind of ailment

they were intended to relieve. Under such circumstances the contents of the phials should be poured down the waste-pipe. To other articles in this closet add a small box of absorbent cotton, and several rolls of antiseptic gauze for bandages. One may not need these things for months, but when they are required it is a great convenience to have them within easy reach.

While on the subject of the bath-room, I want to have a little talk with my sister-woman with regard to her skin, hair and figure,—for much of the attention requisite to keep them in good condition must be given them in this room. It is a matter for regret that in the pure country air, where a woman's skin should be at its best, it is so often neglected, darkened and rough. The farmer's wife has many more chances for the proper care of her personal appearance than has her city sister and yet she neglects this care.

Of course it is necessary to have the inside of the body in good condition before the outside can look well, and I hope that the sensible women who read this chapter know enough to avoid foods that cause dyspepsia and to keep

the bodily functions regular and in good order. I have serious doubts as to whether they take as much exercise in the open air as they should, and during the winter months it is hard to bring one's self to do this day in and day out. When the thermometer is lingering near the zero mark, and the snow is above one's shoe-tops, a tramp along a country road does not sound inviting. But establish the habit of this tramp, and dress for the occasion. Rubber boots are heavy, I know, and snow is hard to walk in. But console yourself with the comforting thought that you are getting just that much more exercise than you would if you walked the same distance in light shoes over a smooth road. Walk enough each day to make the blood course swiftly through your veins and to induce a slight perspiration. Remember that this perspiration is carrying the impurities from your skin. Add to this walk indoor exercises night and morning, just before you take your bath. At this time wear soft felt slippers, and a bath-robe over your night-gown as the room should be cool. A better plan still is to dress in a

loose flannel gymnasium suit, or in a suit of warm pajamas, and take the exercise with the window open. If you are keeping other people away from the bath-room while taking the time to do what one woman calls her "stunts," do them in your own room, but always before you bathe.

I can almost hear the busy woman sigh,—"But it is such a nuisance!" Of course it is,—but it is also a bit of a nuisance to lose one's figure by the time one is forty, and to have a skin that makes one look at least fifteen years older than one really is. And the exercises I suggest will keep the muscles supple, and the figure from growing unwieldy.

Stand erect, hold the chin as you would have to hold it if you had a book on your head and did not wish to drop it. Let the hands hang at the sides and rise upon the toes, then sink back upon the heels. Keep the chest thrown out, the stomach drawn in. Rise on the toes fifteen times. Now, without touching any piece of furniture to steady yourself, stoop down, as you used to stoop when a small child and play-

ing "squat-tag." Then, still without touching anything with the hands, rise to a standing position.

This is difficult for one whose joints are a little stiff, so do it only three times at first. Now, with the hands on the hips, twist the body as far around above the waist-line as you can, keeping the legs stationary, and the heels together. Twist as far as possible to the right side, then equally far to the left side. Do this five times, then bend over as low as you can on each side, repeating this movement five times. Now stretch the arms above the head, rising on tip-toe as if to reach something hanging above you, then, with the hands and arms still stretched out, bend forward and try to touch the floor in front of you with your finger-tips, keeping the knees perfectly stiff. Do this ten times. Lastly, lie at full length on the floor, hands and arms at sides, and try to raise yourself to a sitting posture without touching the arms or hands to the floor to assist you. At first you may not be able to do this, but after practice you can. Do this only three times. Another good exercise for the back is to lie so

that the toes may be slipped under the bottom of a bureau or other heavy article of furniture, thus making it impossible for the legs to be bent. Then draw yourself to a sitting posture. If you do these exercises near an open window, inflating the lungs with the pure air before each one, holding the breath while you could count ten, then expelling it slowly, you will find at the end of five or ten minutes that you are in a glow, and as warm as if you had been taking a brisk walk. When you become accustomed to the regimen it will not consume, at the outside, more than ten minutes night and morning, possibly not more than five. And the exercise will do you much more good than would those additional five minutes in bed.

In the morning as soon as your gymnastics are completed, take a warm,—not hot,—bath, followed by a cold spray. Soap the body thoroughly before getting into the tub and remain there only a minute before turning on the cold spray, applying it, first of all, to the chest and throat, then directing it over each shoulder and down the back, then around the waist, down the legs, and, lastly, over each foot just before

you step from the tub. Wipe the body very dry and rub briskly with a rough crash towel.

If you want a very hot bath, it is well to have it at night, unless it stimulates you to wakefulness. As a rule it soothes and induces sleep. Do not take it oftener than two or three times a week. On other nights be satisfied with a warm sponge-bath, and do not follow this with a cold spray.

Some women like a cold plunge in the morning, all through the year. If the skin reacts after this heroic treatment, and, as is sometimes the case, the bather is in a warm glow before she has finished drying herself, the treatment may be a comfortable one. In many cases it is a distinct shock, and does more harm than good. One must judge by her own sensations as to whether the cold plunge suits her or not. She must also remember that while the cold plunge is often stimulating it is not cleansing, and must not take the place of the frequent bath in warm water.

So much for the general care of the skin of the entire body. The face needs more particular attention.

Unless your face is very dirty,—as it may be after a journey on a railroad that burns soft coal, do not wash it with soap. At night, rub into the skin a good cold cream, *massage* it in with the finger tips, smoothing out the lines, and stroking the face upward to discourage any dragging down or sagging of the muscles. At the end of several minutes wipe the face carefully with a soft linen cloth, and you will be amazed to see the dirt that comes off with the cream. Now put a little almond-meal, or if you have not that, a handful of oatmeal tied up in a small cheese-cloth bag, in a bowl of really warm water, and wash the face thoroughly. Last of all, dash over the face great handfuls of very cold water, and wipe dry,—always remembering to wipe upward, not down. If you wish, you may rub in now a little more cold cream, removing the superfluous grease by patting it lightly with a soft cloth. In the morning, if the face feels at all greasy, wring out a cloth in warm water, wipe it off quickly, then wash immediately in very cold water. If the cream has not been used over-night, or has been absorbed by the skin, wash the face in cold

water only. In cleansing it during the day, use only cold water.

Of the making of face creams there is no end, but my advice would be to decide on one that suits the skin, and adhere to that. Avoid the use of any preparation containing mutton tallow, lanolin, or other animal fats. Lanolin will promote the growth of hair on the face. As I said in another chapter, buttermilk is an excellent cosmetic, softening and whitening the skin. The country-woman has at her disposal in summer one of the best of complexion beautifiers, as the juice from fresh cucumbers is excellent for the skin.

While many people decry powder, there are times when its use is to be commended. If one is going on a dusty ride or drive, it protects the face. Someone says that the woman who uses powder simply fills her pores with white dust, but one might rather have the pores filled with a white dust than with a dirty grimy dust from the roads and cars. As one does not look well when obviously powdered, get a flesh-colored powder,—using only that made by a trustworthy firm. A simple lotion of glycerine and

rose water can be applied to the face, which may then be powdered, before going out into the dust, hot sun or cutting wind. Brush the face off lightly after applying the powder, to dislodge any superfluous deposit on nose, chin or cheeks.

The hands have been mentioned already when I urged the use of rubber gloves in doing housework. If the rubber gloves are not strong enough to suit the wearer, let her use a pair of her husband's or brother's discarded gloves. Do not wash the hands any oftener than is necessary, but when you do wash them, let it be thoroughly, adding a little powdered borax to the warm water in the basin. Rinse in cold water, and partially dry the hands before rubbing on them a glycerine-and-rose-water lotion. When this is well rubbed into the skin, wipe the hands very dry, actually polishing them to be sure that all moisture is removed. With the towel push the cuticle back from the base of the nails. If, in spite of judicious care, your hands are rough or red, rub into them on retiring a generous supply of your favorite cold cream. When it is nearly absorbed, apply to the hands

a pure talcum powder, and rub this well into all the pores, adding more as it is needed. When the hands are well-coated with the talcum, draw on a pair of loose gloves and wear them until morning.

The hair should be washed at least once every three weeks,—oftener, if it is inclined to be greasy. Rub two slightly beaten eggs well into the scalp, and, when the entire head is a mass of moisture, "souse" it into a basin of water as hot as you can comfortably stand it. Wash the hair and scalp well, rubbing the latter hard with the finger-tips, then dip the head in another basinful of clear warm water. Repeat this process until the last water is clear. Now attach the spray to the cold water faucet of the tub, and, with your head under this, spray the scalp thoroughly with cold water. Wipe as dry as you can, then, if the weather is warm, go out into the sun and fresh air and dry your hair there. The country woman is fortunate in that she can do this without having a block-full of neighbors to inspect the process. If the weather is cold, be content to dry the hair in

the flood of sunlight pouring in through closed windows.

Does all this advice seem out of place in a book on the care of the house, or on hints as to housekeeping and home-making? If so, my reader will forgive me when I say that one of my theories with regard to making the home pleasant is that everything in it should be as lovely to look at as time and purse will permit. And what can add more to the beauty of the house than to have the home-maker always at her comely best in health and appearance?

CHAPTER XII

THE GARRET

To the average mind the garret and cobwebs are closely allied. Just to speak the name of the unfinished space under the roof brings before the eye of the imagination a place in which lurk spiders, mice and all kinds of dust,—a room that is unbearably hot in summer, and bitterly cold in winter.

It often deserves the prejudice that exists against it as a necessary and convenient evil. But it is the housekeeper herself that has made it what it is,—so far as its being a deposit-spot for the things that are not fit to be put anywhere else, and a seldom-visited space which is covered with the dust of ages.

The romantic attic in which there were trunks of dead and departed ancestors, filled with the brocades and satins of these richer-than-we forebears, exists only in novels. How I used

to long to see one! In my childish days I read the story of Ginevra, and to my imagination the attic in which the great chest was found was like the one in our own home, but I was discouraged in my hopes of discovering some thrilling family secret in one of our trunks when I learned that my mother had a sadly-modern idea that trunks should be opened and "gone through" each Spring and Autumn, and that our garret was swept regularly. Now to my housewifely spirit comes the wonder as to what kind of a housekeeper the mother of Ginevra must have been, that there should stand in her attic an unopened trunk for a whole life-time. In these days of fumigation and vacuum-cleaning the poor, stifled little bride would have been undisturbed only until the time came around for the Spring house-cleaning.

But, really, the garret should not have to wait even until that time to be swept. At least once a month it should be brushed out. In here, as well as in other parts of the house, it is easier in the long run if one will adopt the suggested motto of "Keep Clean" rather than

"Get Clean." Therefore the attic must be visited often with a broom and duster. The exertion will make it a pleasanter place in which to work when one must go there to get articles out of trunks, to pack away woolens, and to hunt up some stored-away bit of furniture.

Few attics are finished with plaster. I wish that more were, for the boards and beams are fine lurking-places for wasps, hornets and mosquitoes, to say nothing of moth. Remembering this, when the ordeal known as housecleaning takes place be sure to have the inside of the attic roof swept off, taking care to penetrate all corners, and to poke into all crevices with a stiff brush.

Divide your attic into imaginary sections. In one end, or corner, keep any furniture that you may have to store away. But let me beg of you to get rid of pieces that are past-worthy. As I advised with regard to the pictures in your home, do not keep, from a feeling of sentimental association, a lot of unsightly rubbish. If you have any bits of really good furniture, made of oak or mahogany, or other hard wood,

and you hope some day to be able to have them "done over" into presentable articles, keep them carefully. But the cheap high chair that you bought for your first hopeful, and which he broke twenty years ago, need not be kept just because he used to sit in it. If he still lives, you have him, and it is really a bit foolish to cherish his broken chair. If,—and I say this with all seriousness,—he is dead,—do not keep an article that will mean a wrench of the heart every time you see it. May I lay special stress upon this advice? Have you not known, my reader, of trunks stowed away in the old home, trunks that hold the clothing of the dear ones gone to a better Home,—poor, pitiful little pieces of clothing, often riddled by moth and stained by time,—articles which we have not the courage to burn and which we also dread to keep? We do not need bits of cotton, wool and silk to remind us of those who are now clothed in fadeless beauty,—then why cherish these cast-off garments which only add pain to sorrow? In poetry the thought of the "old arm chair" is all very well. It is also a beautiful thing to have the old arm chair

if someone can enjoy sitting in it now. But, if it has fallen to pieces, if the wood is so soft and broken that it is beyond repair, burn it up. Do not keep an ugly, broken piece of lumber to remind you of a life that can never die.

So, first of all, take from your garret all the things that have out-lived their beauty or their usefulness. When you have once determined that they can never, and will never, be used again in this world, give them decent cremation. One does not like to see Johnny's broken cradle, or Grandmother's discarded and crumbling footstool on the wood-pile. It seems almost like desecration. Therefore it is well on some quiet day to build a hot fire at the foot of the garden and here lay gently all the things which have absolutely nothing but memories to commend them. They may go up in smoke; the memories will always linger. If any of the furniture that may be used later has cloth upholstery, brush this off carefully before consigning it to the attic, cover the upholstery with camphor-balls, pin several thicknesses of stiff paper over this, and tack or sew unbleached muslin over the paper. Otherwise,

you are providing a warm breeding-place for that pest of the housewife,—moth.

In arranging your furniture, set the larger pieces next the wall, the smallest towards the room. Then, if you want to find a certain article, it will not be necessary to climb over, or pull out, heavy bureaus or wardrobes to reach a chair or table.

In another part of the garret put the trunks that are left empty to be used by any members of the family who go away on a journey. There should be in every household several good trunks that are kept for this purpose only. I know that there are families in which this is not the rule, and when one wants to go away to spend a few days a trunk packed with woolens, or papers, or linen, must be unpacked, and its contents stored elsewhere, so that the would-be-traveler may have a receptacle in which to carry her wearing apparel. To avoid all this trouble, have at least two empty trunks always on hand.

In other trunks stow away in winter such articles of summer clothing as are not kept in the closets of the owners. Nowadays, each

woman has so many clothes that all her closet-room is usually needed for the garments which are used daily. Therefore when the late Fall days come it is well to pack in trunks the lawns, dimities, and other thin dresses that will not be needed until the trees bud again.

In laying away white or wash-dresses many persons make the mistake of packing them down while slightly soiled, or of having them washed, starched and ironed before packing. Either plan is a mistake. To put away a soiled garment certainly is not cleanly, and the dirt will be much harder to remove after it has remained in the delicate fabric for a period of several months. On the other hand, a starched dress, when not used for months, has a tendency to turn yellow, and, besides needing washing in the Spring, will also need to be bleached before it is again pure white. The proper thing to do with what are known as "tub dresses" is to have them washed perfectly clean, dried, and put away unstarched and unironed. When the warm weather comes, a rapid washing in soft water will make them ready for starching and pressing.

Putting up the Winter clothing is a much more serious matter than packing away the thin clothes. The moth, who like his Satanic majesty goes about seeking what he may devour, is always lurking *somewhere* in readiness to make any woolen article his home. And as wool is not only his home, but his food, the damage he does is not to be treated lightly.

Like other vermin, fresh air and sunshine are the bane of the clothes-moth. Therefore, before packing the winter clothing, throw open the garret windows and let in an abundance of fresh air and sunlight. Open wide and empty entirely the trunks destined to hold the woolens. With a whisk-broom brush out each receptacle, then, with a cloth dipped in household ammonia and wrung as dry as possible, wipe out all corners and creases. A cloth wet with gasoline is also good for this purpose, as the strong odor is distasteful to the insects. Remember that the tiny eggs are hard to see, and that they will hatch surely in the darkness of the trunk unless they are removed. I wish that every housekeeper were the owner of a large cedar chest in which to keep valuable

winter-garments. The odor of cedar is disagreeable to moth, therefore a chest of cedar, or one lined with this wood, is especially adapted to the purpose for which it is made. Lacking this, a stout trunk or box is a good substitute.

Another odor which the *genus* moth finds detestable is that of turpentine. If you wish, you may sprinkle this in the bottom of your trunks.

And now as to the treatment of the garments themselves. Choose a clear day and give up some hours to the task before you. Have the woolens and furs carried out to the veranda. Brush each garment well, sponging with household ammonia any spots or obstinate dust-stains. Be sure to get each article thoroughly clean. Then hang on the clothes-line and, with a little switch, whip lightly, taking care not to have the strokes heavy enough to injure the fabric. Shake hard, and put back on the line, leaving the clothing in the fresh air for several hours. If you have many garments this will consume so much of the day that the packing must be deferred to the morrow. Lay the clothes over-night in a room which you know to

be free from moth. The next morning, fold each article, sprinkling between the folds crushed camphor or camphor-balls, and pin it up securely in several thicknesses of newspaper. This is better than brown paper, as the moth are not fond of printer's ink. Buy a paper of strong and long pins for this purpose. Wrap each newspaper parcel in a stout piece of unbleached muslin, pinning this up securely. Our grandmothers used to sew up each bundle with stout thread. The pinning process is more rapid and does just as well, always supposing one uses enough of such pins as I have mentioned. Before laying down the parcel, write on the white cloth with a blue pencil just what it contains. In the Fall when you want to get out certain articles, you will find it a great convenience and saving of time if you do not have to open a half-dozen bundles before finding the one article you seek.

When all the woolens are done up, carry them to the garret and stow them away in trunks. Have tacked inside of the cover of each trunk a list of the garments, etc., that it contains. This list can be made out readily by copying

the "inscription" upon each parcel. If your trunks are old or not tightly made, line each one with newspaper before packing, and, when all the garments are in, cover them with a large newspaper before closing the lid.

Furs require somewhat the same treatment, —that is, they should be shaken and beaten in the open air, and left there for some hours. But it is well to put them in a box by themselves so that the long hair does not become pressed or twisted. Smooth the fur muff or neck-piece, sprinkle with camphor, wrap it in tissue-paper, then in newspaper, and then in muslin. Lay in a paste-board box, and paste strips of stout muslin at the place where the edge of the cover comes, so that no moth can creep into the box.

It is always troublesome to look for small woolen articles,—such as gloves, wristlets, or scarfs,—in a large trunk. One woman keeps a tin box,—(one of the kind that comes with ten pounds of crackers)—for these little things, wrapping each piece by itself,—except the gloves, which are put away in pairs. Indeed,

if one has large tin boxes to spare, they are excellent things in which to put furs.

If one lifts her heavy rugs in Summer, laying in their place those of cotton or matting, the winter floor-covering will have to go into the attic. The rugs must first be laid on the grass, and well-beaten, then swept hard, after which they may be sprinkled with an abundance of gasoline into which crushed gum camphor has been stirred. Now spread out each rug, lay over its surface a thin sheet of cheese-cloth, sprinkle this with camphor, and roll up the rug as you would a sheet of music, rolling the cheese-cloth cover with it. Wrap in newspapers, then in muslin, and lay in the garret. It is well to wash the floor where the rugs are to go with turpentine, to kill any moth or their eggs that may be in that region.

One breeding place for moth is the family rag-bag or scrap-bag. Into this are stuffed all kinds of materials, among them many a scrap of woolen. Then the bag is hung in the hot garret and not disturbed for weeks at a time. What better home could the most fastid-

ious moth want? The wise housewife will keep her rag-bag only for bits of muslin, cotton and silk, and even these should be looked over twice each year. For woolen scraps, which may be needed later, she should have a tin box such as has been already suggested, and should keep the contents liberally sprinkled with camphor-balls.

Do not pile furniture or trunks against the attic windows. The passage to them should be free, and they should be thrown open frequently. The rooms below the attic will be much cooler in summer if the windows are often left open all night, when there is no threatening of rain. Moreover, wash the windows when they are dirty. I have never been able to understand why the otherwise careful housewife should allow the glass in the garret panes to become encrusted with dirt and cobwebs. The fact that nobody besides the family sees this dirt, makes it no less dirt.

An inmate of the garret that should be banished is the mouse. Here he revels. One can hear him scurry across the floor as one mounts the stairs. As he must eat, and there is no food

at hand, he will gnaw at the paste or mucilage on boxes and trunks, will run into the rag-bag to chew the starch from the bits of muslin or gingham in that, will gnaw the backs off any books that are packed up here, and will do all the damage that he knows how to do. Rats are even worse, for, as they are larger, their depredations are greater. If there is a good family cat on the premises, encourage her to make the garret her abiding-place at night. If she be taken up at bed-time, and a comfortable bit of carpet provided for her bed, she will soon acquire the habit of making this her lodging-place, and the rats and mice will decide to change their quarters.

If, however, you have no cat, and do not want one, smear the rat-holes with tar. Do the same with the mouse-holes,—if you can find them. Once every two weeks set traps, baited with toasted cheese, for the mice. As there is little else for the rodents to eat in the garret, they will go into the traps. If you do this for two nights in sequence every fortnight you will greatly decrease the colony of mice. Rats are a more serious problem, but bread spread with

sugar mixed with some deadly poison will banish them. But remember when you have put these bits of bread in the garret, and keep any pet-dog you may happen to have away from that place.

After all, there is no other mouse or rat exterminator, as sure and safe as the first I suggested,—a big sleek house-cat who understands her business.

Do not establish in your family what someone calls "the garret-habit." This consists in relegating everything about which there is any doubt as to where it should be kept, to the attic.

"Where are you going to put your skates my son?" asks the mother when the last vestige of ice has gone.

"In the attic!" is the prompt reply.

And when the summer goes, and she asks where the base-balls, bats, and tennis-raquets are going, the answer is the same—"In the attic!" The man of the house, in looking over his pipes or shoes, his books or shabby hats, has one reply to the question as to their destination,—"Oh, up in the garret!"

If this habit is established, stop it. It is a direct contradiction to the truth of the adage which asserts that "there is a place for everything and everything in its place." I speak strongly, having had the experience of helping to clear out the attic in an old home which a friend was leaving. Never have I seen such a collection,—no, not in a junk-shop. Each member of the family had put up there every article which he or she had found in his or her way down-stairs. Through long years the careful house-mother had had these things dusted, wiped off carefully, and—put back. Surely she was a patient soul! Pictures, books, cushions, sleds, skates, games, shoes, slippers, hats, caps, vases, ink-stands, and, worst of all, letters! There was a mass of these,—all packed away neatly, to be sure, in boxes, marked with the name of the owner,—but yellowed by time, and gnawed by mice. As one gazed at the mass of them one knew why some people burn each letter as soon as it is answered. And what was to be done with the things? The persons who had put them there had forgotten they ever had them,—which is

but a proof that it was a mistake to keep them in the first place.

"Blessed be nothing!" said a dear, elderly woman in my presence years ago.

I smiled indulgently then, as she said it. It seemed strange that she should feel it a burden to have had to "go through" the boxes in the attic in the home she had lived in for a half-century. She was the only one left there, and her remark was made after a morning among the mementos of dead and gone people and years.

"And the letters!" she sighed, "What shall I do with the children's letters!"

Her eyes filled with tears. Looking back now, I know what she felt. Those boxes of letters,—what needless heart-aches they mean! As one pulls a letter from the mass of yellowed envelopes in a box one filled ten years ago, a pet-name starts from the page, a single sentence leaps up before the eyes, and there is a constriction of the heart, and a grip at the heart-strings, a catch in the throat, and a pain that is actually physical causes one to gasp. For a moment all the changes that the years

have brought gradually seem to face one, and one is overwhelmed at the realization of them all.

Yet,—what can be done with the letters? Had the practical advice "Burn them!" been followed in all cases what a priceless legacy the world of literature would have missed! And in our own cases, when the letters we receive are not from those who will ever be famous, it hurts to destroy them.

Once a dear one advised me to make a huge fire of the boxes of correspondence I had in my attic. I was moving from a country house into the city. Why, he argued, keep those epistles? He declared rightly that rereading them was one of the most depressing tasks in the world; and, if one did not read them, of what use were they?

So, setting my face like a flint, and holding my weak self well in hand, I burned the letters.

Wise? Yes,—I suppose it was. But—I am not a rich woman, yet I would give a great deal if I could now have some of the dear letters I burned that day.

CHAPTER XIII

CLOSETS

THERE are few better tests of the quality of one's housekeeping than the condition of the various closets.

I do not believe that housekeeper exists who has too many of them. If she had her way, and it were practicable to have two closets for each room in the house, I think that the average woman would rejoice. If one has ever lived in a city apartment she will appreciate, as she never did before, the comfort of large pantries and wardrobes. The farmer's wife has such at her disposal, with an abundance of space that should give her many thrills of thankfulness. We think almost with envy of the Colonial housekeepers who had closets as large as some of our present hall-bedrooms. Some of these were lighted by a good-sized window. No wonder the women of that day could afford to wear hoopskirts and voluminous and numerous

skirts, for they had some place to keep them without crushing them.

The clothes closets for the entire family are so much alike that they are not as interesting as are the linen and china cupboards, but they must be considered. The man's wardrobe is simple compared with a woman's, for his coat and trousers-hangers hold his clothing in the proper shape, and he has no frills and flounces to get crushed and mussed. But his closets must be watched carefully for any symptoms of the ubiquitous moth. Every few weeks take out the clothing, remove hats and boxes from the shelves, and brush out the corners. If there are any signs of the destructive insect, make a raid upon his haunts each week, injecting turpentine or gasoline freely into joints and cracks. Air and brush each article of clothing before replacing it. When one ceases to see moth or their eggs, once every month or six weeks will be often enough to inspect clothing and woodwork.

It is a pity that a dust-proof closet has never been invented. Some housekeepers fasten a sheet over the clothing after this has been care-

fully hung on the hooks provided for it. My experience with this curtain-arrangement is that it is a nuisance,—especially when one is in a hurry to find some particular garment. But if one must have a sheet or curtain, I would suggest the following plan. At each end of the closet have stout sockets screwed to the wall, and fit a small curtain-pole,—about as large round as your little finger, in these sockets. Have the pole of brass, as the rings slide on this more easily than on wood. Let the curtains be of some washable material,—such as cotton-cloth, or light cretonne. Sew the brass curtain-rings to this with stout linen thread, and put them quite close together. The curtains can then be kept closed all the time, except when one opens them to get out a garment. They certainly keep out the dust, but a tightly-fitting closet-door will do the same,—if people will only remember to keep it closed. But if one neglects to do this, one will, in the same way, neglect to draw the curtains. One does not often pause to remember that a closet-door partly open is an evidence of carelessness and untidiness.

The woman who keeps her bureau-drawers tightly closed, and considers it slovenly to leave them open, will have her wardrobe door ajar much of the time. She does not appreciate that when she does this her garments are absolutely unprotected from the dust that sifts through the room.

And when dust gets into women's clothing it is not as easy to dislodge as when it gets on men's clothes. So it behooves the wearers to guard against it. For this purpose provide long bags for the light woolen or silk dresses, or for any gowns of delicate colors or fabric.

A bag to cover an entire gown should be long enough to allow the garment to hang at full length. One must, of course, have a hanger. Slip the skirt over this, and shake it perfectly smooth, so that no wrinkles will be formed. Fit the waist on the hanger, fastening it so securely that it will not fall off. Now have someone hold open the deep and wide bag while you lay the garments carefully into it, then draw the string about the top of the hanger and put the whole thing on a closet-hook. This is, however, at best, such a troublesome process that

I would like to tell of a scheme a friend evolved from an ancient garment.

This woman had an old and large night-gown with a Dutch neck. One day when a light costume came home she wanted to put it away, and yet had nothing to envelop it in. She remembered the old night-dress. She cut off the sleeves about three-quarters of the way up the arm, and sewed the edges of each remaining "stump" neatly together. On a hanger she fastened the dress in the usual way, then put over it the gown, just as if she were slipping it over the head of a human being. The hook of the hanger went through the Dutch neck, which was then drawn up closely with a draw-string and tied to this hook, so that it could not slip. The whole arrangement was hung in the closet, and, as the hem at the bottom of the gown fell several inches below the bottom of the dress skirt, the entire dress was protected. Nevertheless my ingenious friend pinned the two sides of the gown-bottom together with large safety-pins.

From this improvised clothes-covering this woman got a new idea, and cut other dress-

cases after the pattern of the old gown, omitting the sleeves, and making the shoulders very wide. The hem at the bottom of each case was fitted out with buttons and button-holes instead of with safety-pins.

There are many styles of dress hangers, the pretty ones covered with a cushion of silk being especially popular. These cushions may contain one's favorite sachet-powder. Waist-hangers have sometimes pretty muslin waist-envelopes which can be slipped over them, and these can be feather-stitched or embroidered with silk to match that of which the sachet-cushion is made. These are especially nice for light waists or for shirt-waists.

It is well to keep one end of the closet for wash-dresses, the other for the heavier clothing. Divide the entire space into sections, if you would simplify the finding of any article without searching among a host of other garments. That is, on certain hooks at one end, put all underskirts, or other underwear; on others all wrappers and tea-gowns; still farther along hang dresses worn each day, and beyond these keep the coats and jackets. At the end farthest

from the door hang the handsomest and least-used gowns. On the floor can be arranged the boots and shoes, while the shelf can hold the hats in boxes.

One of the unpleasant facts that one disregards,—perhaps because it *is* unpleasant,—is that dresses worn in warm weather and put away when taken off give to the closet and its contents a very disagreeable odor. Therefore, when possible, let a dress hang over a chair near an open window for several hours before hanging it up with other garments. The dress taken off at night may be shaken, and left on a chair until the following morning. And yet, in spite of one's care along these lines, a closet will, especially in Summer, become close. Therefore take all the dresses out occasionally, open the door wide and leave it open until the stale air has time to get out and an abundance of fresh air to get in before re-hanging the clothing.

The well-stocked linen-closet or linen-room is the pride of the housewifely heart. No man could understand the especial joy it gives his wife to look at her stacks of spotless bed and

table-linen. Even if she keeps an excellent servant she should insist on putting away her own linen, and in handing it out when it is needed. Nobody else will take the care of it that the owner does.

In another chapter we have spoken of the kinds of sheets which one may have. If you have linen ones, be, as I have already suggested, somewhat stingy about them. Have an abundance of muslin sheets, and two grades of these. Keep the finest for the use of the older members of the family, and for guests. Use on the children's beds a good quality, but not the very best. In the same way, have fine cambric or muslin pillow-slips for the youngsters, but reserve those of handsome linen for persons who are past the pillow-fight age.

Have each grade of sheets and pillow-cases in a pile by itself. Arrange towels in piles, putting all of one pattern in one stack. You will become so familiar with the positions of the various articles that after a while you can find the desired pillow-slip or towel in the dark. One thing I would like to lay stress upon is the excellent plan of putting single-bed sheets

in one place, those for double-beds in another; large pillow-slips by themselves, small ones in their own corner. When one opens a sheet and throws it over a double bed, and finds that it is too narrow, one's temper is a bit strained; the same feeling is produced by trying to squeeze a big pillow into a small case.

One should have sundry grades of towels. Always have some really handsome ones for the use of guests. These may be as elaborate as you desire, and if you have the time to embroider them with an effective letter or monogram, do so. Have still another grade for the grown persons in the household, and let these be as handsome as the others,—if you wish. But always have on hand numbers of good stout linen towels, that are not of the finest and most expensive grade. Huckaback is good toweling, and will wear better than will damask for the use I suggest. Let the boys and girls of the family wipe their hands and faces on these useful towels. The small boy, "washing up" after playing in the dirt, petting the dogs, feeding the chickens, and helping harness the horses, will dip his hands in water, rub on

the soap hastily, dip the grimy paws again in the water, rub the wet hands over his face, then bury face and hands in the immaculate linen towel. Any mother will testify that until a boy is sixteen,—sometimes after he is that age,—he washes himself in this way when called in to get ready for lunch or dinner. The result is that the towels he uses are spotted and darkened, looking somewhat like the maps of the mountains of the moon by the time they reach the wash-tub. To get them clean they must be rubbed on the board long and hard, and at the end of a few weeks fine damask subjected to this kind of treatment grows thin, and soon breaks forth in holes. For this reason get towels of rather coarse and heavy texture for every-day use.

Do not, however (for what you feel to be reasons of economy), get small towels. They do not look nice, and they increase the size of the weekly washing, as two of them are required to do the work that one of good proportions would perform. Be sure to have enough of all grades so that you will not fall short in case of an emergency.

Years ago I had an experience that impressed my mind so that I have never forgotten it. I chanced to be calling on a woman whose house seemed to be neat and well-kept. I knew nothing of her husband's means, but I knew that the wife dressed handsomely, had two servants, and went in good society. While I was making the call of which I speak, my hostess was taken suddenly ill, and, as her frightened husband, helped by a servant and myself, carried her to her room, he begged that I remain with her. Of course I consented, and when the doctor came I carried out his orders until the nurse for whom he telephoned arrived. In doing this I was sent to the bath-room for clean towels. I found just two towels here—both soiled. The husband showed me the linen closet, but there were only two towels in there,—both torn. Hurrying downstairs I called the maid and asked her where I would find what I sought.

"Sure, ma'am, there ain't no more towels! There's eight in the wash, and the ironin' ain't done, and them upstairs makes the dozen!"

Two grown people, and two servants in a household,—and but twelve towels! I think

the housewife who reads these pages can imagine what I thought.

Well-stocked linen-shelves are evidence of the wife and mother who "looks well after the ways of her household." A plenty of towels are an essential to the properly regulated family.

Marseilles quilts or bed-spreads are still used, but there are also many counterpanes of lighter weight that are as pretty and much more easy to handle, to wash and to iron. Dainty counterpanes of dimity are light and convenient. Honeycomb spreads wear well, and have about them enough weight to be comfortable when the nights are chilly. The heavy counterpanes that are used only in the daytime do not require frequent washing. The thin night-spreads must be changed as often as they become soiled.

As to the table linen,—each housewife knows best what she needs. But here again I would advise,—have a plenty. Do not allow yourself to run short of napkins, but buy more before you need them.

That is where the secret of a well-stocked

linen closet lies. Do not let anything get low before you purchase others. Watch for chances to buy cheaply. For instance, January is, in most city stores, the month of the "great white sales." Make it your business at this time to buy enough towels to replace those that are getting thin in the center, although they may last for some weeks to come. If you see a "good bargain" in table-linen, replenish your stock from this. You may not need a new dinner-cloth or napkins just now, but will you not before the year is out? And when you do, you may not be able to get them as cheaply as at this special sale. One woman buys her linen once a year,—and that is during January. Then she always gets at least a dozen new towels, a set of large, and one of small, napkins, a tablecloth, several lunch and breakfast squares, and such doylies and centerpieces as she is sure she will want before another twelvemonth. If one will establish this habit, and not depart from it, she will never have to buy new linen in large quantities. To do that is a great expense.

It is cheaper to get dish-towels by the piece,

and cut and hem them yourself. While one may wish her table-linen hemmed by hand, if possible,—do not waste precious time in hemming kitchen-towels by hand, but do them on the machine.

Watch all your linen, and when it shows signs of wear, mend it, darning it neatly. Tablecloths carefully darned will last for many weeks longer than if allowed to get worn in holes before mending. So before the hole comes, do the darning.

Nearly every housewife knows how sheets can be "turned," so that the worn places that were in the middle will be at the sides. The sheet is simply cut in half up the middle, and the halves turned around, so that the two outer edges meet. These are sewed neatly and smoothly together, while the outside edges, that were once the center of the sheet, must be hemmed. A sheet with a seam up the middle may not look very pretty, but it is perfectly comfortable to lie on, and, if all of the sheet except the center is good and firm, it should not be cast aside as past-worthy.

Towels that have begun to break into holes

can sometimes be cut into squares and hemmed, then used for bathing the face. This is especially true of crash bath-towels, which make excellent wash-cloths.

In buying wash-cloths, try to get a different pattern or design for each member of the family. One cloth may have a red border, another, a blue one; one person may have a crocheted square, another, one made of flannelette. This prevents confusion, and insures each one using his or her own.

Do not throw away old linen. If one of your fine pillow-cases is worn out, never allow it to be used for dusters, floor-cloths, etc. Instead, fold it and lay it aside until you have time to cut or tear it into squares or strips for use in case of accident. A roll of bandages made of old linen is an unspeakable comfort when there is a cut or crushed finger, or a burn or bruise. Reserve a corner of your linen closet for this old linen. In one family where there are many children the mother keeps the worn pillow-slips, and, when the winter influenzas arrive, she tears them into squares and the children use them in the house instead of handkerchiefs.

As soon as they are soiled they are burned.

On the floor of the linen closet may stand the mending basket, in which is laid each article that needs repairing.

While on the subject of mending it may be well to warn the frugal housewife against a "penny wise and pound foolish" policy practiced, in the cause of economy, by many women. This consists in the mending and patching of garments that are really past their days of usefulness, and should be cast aside. The woman whose time is worth anything wastes it when she spends an hour or two in repairing a garment that may be worn but once or twice more.

"I can get another wear out of this," she says, and for the sake of that one wear she will spend several hours straining her eyes and nerves darning or piecing something that will not look well after all her work. Perhaps the first time she wears it the thin fabric breaks again, and is then gone beyond repair. One of the boys needs new underwear, and his mother expects to get it for him within a week or two. But it hurts her over-sensitive conscience not

to mend the old garments as long as there is enough of them to hold together. One boy insists that with one pair of woolen drawers his mother "built a new pair around the holes," and yet that he "sat right through them" the second day he wore them. Was it worth the time and trouble, when one considers that in less than a week the new underwear had to be bought anyway?

Do not think that I am belittling the art of repairing. I think it a necessity in every household, and I admire the woman who can make a garment last longer than it would ordinarily, and who can turn sheets, darn linen, patch underwear, mend stockings, and make over clothes.

A clever needle-woman showed me a gown that she had worn for six years, altering it with each season, and always making it pretty and tasteful. The material was handsome, and the result well worth the time expended on it. But when one pays twenty-five cents for a pair of school stockings, it is foolish to spend two-and-a-half-dollars' worth of time in repairing them after they have been used for six months, and

are a mass of darns from top to toe. By the time the small boy has worn them one day to school his knees will be through them, and all your labor will have been spent for naught.

So, in mending, learn to discriminate between that which is worth saving, and that which should be discarded altogether.

The mending basket is a thing of size and importance in a family where there are children. It is therefore well to train the youngsters to lay in this basket any garment as soon as it needs repairing. The stitch in time that saves nine is a considerable factor in a large household, and when multiplied by nine it assumes depressing proportions. When a button comes off the child should put it in the button-box or bag, and lay the shirt or other garment from which the button came on the mending basket and tell the mother that this has been done. As soon as there is a little break in the stocking it should be removed before it yawns into a mighty hole. A mother's pains and time are saved by these thoughtful acts on the part of the boys and girls.

Even mending can become pleasant if done

in agreeable company. Let the mother get into the habit of having her sewing brought into the living room on cool evenings, so that she can enjoy the pleasant chat, or, better still, can have husband, son or daughter read aloud while she sews. It is wonderful how all drudgery departs from work done under such circumstances, how rapidly the fingers fly, and how the details of the story read are before the mind of the worker instead of the monotonous "stitch, stitch, stitch." This monotony has done much towards putting women in the insane asylum. There is no surer way to get too much time for musing and introspection than to sit alone and quiet at one's sewing hour after hour. A clever novelist has said that if ever the hidden tragedies and secret sorrows in a woman's heart come to her face, it is when she sits solitary over monotonous sewing. Avoid this kind of thing, or, if you must be alone when you sew, force the thoughts into pleasant channels. In summer, take the mending basket out on the veranda. One is less likely to become depressed and moody out in the free and pure air. Above all, do not regard the work

as drudgery. Think of each article of clothing that you repair as a bit of love-work that you do for the owner. The love that lightens all labor will lighten yours.

Having shut the door of our linen closet, let us turn to another place equally dear to the housekeeper's heart,—the china and glass closet.

Put on the shelves that are most easily reached the crockery used every day. At the back of the shelf tack a strip of wood, and stand the platters up behind this strip which will keep them from slipping. You can thus take out a platter that is needed without having to lift off several others that may be set upon it. Moreover, the dishes thus arranged are ornamental. Stack the plates of various sizes in separate piles, towards the back or end of a shelf, and put cups and saucers in front of them, or at one side. Glasses that are in daily use need not be inverted on the shelves, but those that are used seldom should be turned upside down that the dust may not settle in them. Vegetable dishes should be put in the

closet covered, for the same reason. Unless a plate has been used within twenty-four hours, establish the habit of wiping it off with a soft cloth before putting it upon the table. You will be dismayed to see how soon the cloth becomes grimy. In Summer, dust from the road sifts into the house, while in Winter the ashes from fires form an impalpable, but very real, deposit everywhere. Keep the largest and heaviest articles on the bottom shelves of your closet, and be sure that each shelf has a strong support which will stand a load of crockery.

If you have a servant, you will have to keep a keen eye on your supply of china and glass. In the course of a long and varied existence I have had just one maid who would come to me of her own accord and tell me when she had broken an article. And this in spite of the fact that I never reproved a maid for a breakage, always urging her to tell me of an accident, and assuring her that I would not "scold." But it seems to be an instinct of the class to hide a bit of broken crockery as surely as it is the instinct of a dog to bury a bone. If you do not watch your shelves yourself, some day when

you want a particular bit of china, it will be gone, and nobody will know anything about it. Or, when cleaning-day comes, it will be found tucked away out of sight in the highest and darkest corner of your pantry, and "nobody did it" will be the verdict.

Why a maid that is truthful and honest in most things should deceive and falsify with regard to this one matter is incomprehensible. I do not pretend to explain, but I know it is a fact.

Therefore, if you would know how your crockery stands wear, watch it yourself. Establish the habit of "going through" the closet every week or two, and setting the contents to rights. If you have no maid you will not have to do this so often, for you will have the comfort of knowing exactly what you have, and of being sure as to its condition.

You are fortunate if you own a corner glass closet, with glass doors. If you do not, your village carpenter can make one with little outlay or expense. In this closet you may keep, if you wish, your choicest bits of cut glass and your most delicate china. A strip of wood at

the back of the shelves may form a support against which the plates can rest, standing on their edges, as has been suggested with regard to the meat platters. Small hooks may be screwed in the under side of the shelves, and from these you can hang your prettiest cups, while the saucers stand on the shelves under them. In fact, in this closet you can let your taste have free play, and make it as pretty and ornamental as you wish.

It is fortunate for the modern housewife that it is no longer essential that all the china used on the table at one time should "match."

A cup and saucer of one pattern, a plate of another, and a butter plate of still a third design are considered the "proper thing" quite as much as are unbroken sets. So if a woman has a complete dinner or tea set, she is in fashion, but if her china has been gathered here and there, and at different times and places, she is still doing the correct thing in setting her table with as many different patterns as she possesses. Of course all the plates used for one course are alike, as are all the water-glasses set on the table for one meal, and all the

cups match their saucers, but beyond that one may have as many colors and designs as she wishes.

When a pet bit of china is broken, do not despair until you are sure that it cannot be mended. If your large platter or vegetable dish has "just come apart" in the hands of your maid, have the two pieces riveted firmly together by one who understands the art. You may buy excellent cement for mending china, but the trouble with most of these preparations is that they will soften when put into hot water, or when hot foods are placed in them. This is not so with the riveting process. To tell the truth, the riveted plate is often stronger than before it was broken. So take heart of grace, collect your broken china,—if it is valuable enough to be worth the mending,—and send it to the city to be repaired. Even heavy cut-glass bowls and dishes can be mended, and while they may not look as pretty as they did to your critical eye, the average beholder will not notice the rivets, especially when the bowl or dish has fruit, jelly or cream in it.

But, when a thing is once broken beyond re-

pair, throw it away, and as far away as possible. Said one wise housewife:

"I wish when anyone breaks a saucer, she would deliberately break the cup directly afterwards. Then I would not have an unsightly and unpaired reminder of my loss always staring me in the face. It seems a sin to throw away a good cup, and yet one cannot put it on the table with a saucer that does not match. And a fine china cup cannot be used for measuring flour and sugar in the kitchen."

She was right. Many of us know the nuisance of odd saucers and cups, and pitchers whose handles have been broken into many fragments. Yet we do not like to throw these away. But set your teeth, shut your eyes, and throw them away,—unless they can be used to hold a bit of butter, cream or gravy left over. Even then, they are a nuisance, for dainty crockery is out of place in the ice-chest. Therefore when your broken china offends your good taste and common sense, cast it from you.

Do not cover your china closet shelves with oil-cloth. I know this is recommended by some housekeepers, but I have found that in hot and

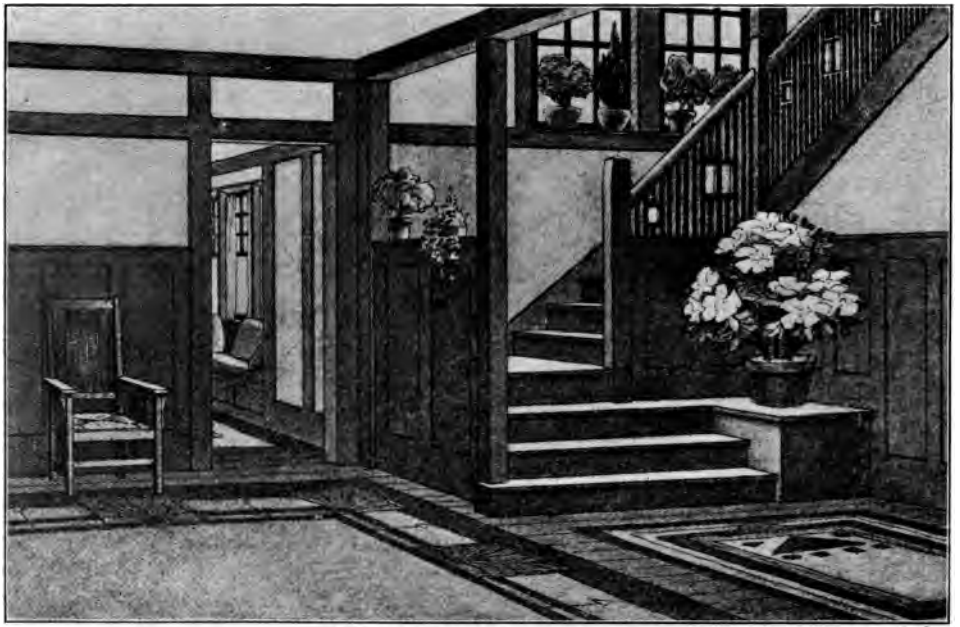
damp weather the oil-cloth sometimes becomes sticky, and the dishes adhere to it, and must be pulled hard to loosen then. Sometimes they stick so tenaciously that when the dish is taken up a bit of the coloring of the oil-cloth comes with it. So be content with shelf-papers, and change these often. Use plain white, as this harmonizes with china of all colors, and gives a fresh and dainty appearance to the entire closet.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SERVANT IN THE HOUSE

In most of my talks in this little volume I have taken it for granted that the housewives whom I addressed did their own work,—or a great part of it. I am, however, well aware that some of my readers keep at least one maid, and with them I would like to have a little chat. This chat might almost be called "an experience meeting," for I, too, have lived in the country, and have kept,—or tried to keep,—a maid "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,"—or, in other words, far from the city and all the attractions that it holds for the average servant.

The woman in town thinks she knows something about trouble with servants, but her lot is easy compared with that of a farmer's wife. In town there is always the employment agency to which one can turn for help, there are always



By permission, from "The Craftsman."

ENTRANCE HALL AND STAIRWAY

numbers of women who go out to work by the day, and there are the advertising columns of the newspapers. One may not secure what one wants, but one can usually get a woman who will serve as a "stop-gap" until one can look about and get something better.

Not so in country homes. In the village itself can be found very few girls who will enter domestic service in the place where they were born and raised. They prefer to go to the city, or to the nearest factory, rather than occupy what they consider a "menial position" in any family. One may find a woman who will go out by the day, but she is such a rarity if she works well, that she has as many engagements as has any popular society belle. And when she does consent, for a consideration of dollars and cents, to do your washing and ironing, she has the air of royalty stooping to confer a favor upon an inferior. Blessed is the housewife who has a sense of humor under such conditions!

Last Summer a city visitor to a country-town asked the name of a good laundress. She was given the address of the best worker in the vil-

lage, and, packing several skirts and shirt-waists in a bag, she sent them to the laundress by her chauffeur. When the man reached the house he sought, the door was opened by the laundress herself.

"Here," he said, holding out the bag, "are a few things which Mrs. D., who is visiting Mrs. L., wants washed. She would like to know when she can get them back."

The much-sought-after laundress drew herself to her full height and eyed him scornfully.

"Take those things,"—with a majestic wave of her hand worthy of Mrs. Wilfer,—"back to the person who sent them. I am not acquainted with Mrs. D.!"

To persuade this woman (who would accept the highest prices) to do her work, Mrs. D., should, herself, have called at the door, introduced herself, chatted for a moment about the weather, told her hostess (!) some of the complimentary remarks she had heard made about her work, and then, with due humility, have asked her if she thought she could "make time to wash a few articles that were rather fine in texture, and should, therefore, be done

up by someone who was used to handling nice things and understood her business."

With such a preamble our city guest might have won a patronizing,—"Well, I don't know but what I may as well try to do 'em," after which she would have been charged the most extortionate of prices for work that would have been only passably well done.

This sounds like exaggeration, but I know whereof I speak, for I have had similar experiences, until I have felt as if I were begging for my daily bread when I have asked a woman to come to my home to wash and iron, or do housework.

Therefore, unless the village near which our farmer's wife dwells has some inhabitants who *want* to go into domestic service, I would suggest that my reader would do well to get her servants from the nearest city. And this, too, is a task that is fraught with difficulties.

The uneducated woman living in the city does not want to live in the country. We deplore this fact, and, looking at it from our own standpoint, we speak of her as foolish, lacking in appreciation of a good home, or blind to the

beauties of nature. We tell of how we have taken into our pretty, well-kept, airy and comfortable houses girls from the slums, who have no proper food, who sleep in dark rooms, and live in crowded tenements; and yet these same girls have been dissatisfied, averred that they were "dreadful lonesome in the country" and, after a week or so, have insisted on going back to the "pit from whence they were digged." And we call it unnatural, insane.

But is it? Stop a moment, and consider the case.

Let us suppose that you live in a small country village, surrounded by your own family and friends; you have a tiny home, many privations, and few luxuries. But you have the life to which you have become accustomed; you have your own special friends and neighbors; you and they have your social joys in common. One day an offer comes to you to go to a place where you have never been before, where you are to be in the employ of persons of whom you know nothing. You go, and find yourself in a large and comfortable home; you are well-fed, well-lodged and kindly treated. But there is

not a person there who knows anything about you or your family; you are cut off entirely from all your old associates; you have only your work to do, and then are allowed to rest, or to walk along country-roads looking at things in which you see no beauty, and which bore you to extinction.

Right here I must remind my reader that the fact that you could endure such an existence is because you are educated to see beauties in nature, because you love to read, because you have been taught to think of what is worth while. Not so with our hypothetical domestic. She never reads anything deeper than the paragraphs beneath the "scare-heads" in the daily papers, and then with some difficulty; she has never known that the mind can be a kingdom,—(how should she?)—while the glories of a sunset on the distant hills are nothing more to her unseeing eye than a splash of color, and not nearly as interesting as the gaudy posters pasted on the fences of vacant lots in the city. There is some action in those! Therefore, you must suppose that in this comfortable home to which you have gone to work, you may not read,

or see the things you love, or think great thoughts,—because you have never learned how. Moreover you are there simply as the machine to do another's bidding. A well cared-for machine, to be sure, but nothing more. Would you not, at the end of a week of such an existence, plead to go back to the little village home, with all its discomforts, but where you will be surrounded by those who love you, and where you can enjoy the pleasures of which you have always been a part? Before we condemn the city girl for dreading the country, let us remember that view of the case.

Let us remember, also that she can secure in the city "places" in apartments or houses in which the work is reduced to the easiest lines possible,—where a turn of a handle or switch lights her kitchen fire for her, where the ice, and milk, and bread are brought direct to her hand; where, if a dessert is wanted in a hurry, it can be procured from the nearest pastry-cook's shop, and where—best of all—on her afternoon or evening "out" she may, in a half-hour after she leaves her comfortable "place,"

be at the door of her own home and among her own kind. Theatres, dances, gossip and church, are all where she can get them.

The last mentioned attraction,—church,—means much to the Roman Catholic maid when she thinks of a place in the country, and the housewife who lives where there is no Roman Catholic church. would best make up her mind that the domestics she engages must be Protestants,—as even the smallest country village can, as a rule, boast at least one Protestant place of worship.

Still, in spite of all the drawbacks I have mentioned, there are servants who are willing to go to the country. Sometimes they really like the rural life. Some of them have lived, in childhood, in villages, and the glamour lingers. Others, perhaps too old to care any longer for the city bustle and gayety, love the country quiet. Our farmer's wife is fortunate if she can secure such a person. Sometimes, however, she is driven to get what our grandmothers used to call "a bound-girl" from some institution. Once in a great while this

arrangement is a success; oftener there is only one party to the contract more miserable than the girl, and that is her mistress.

In engaging a servant one must bear one fact in mind: if one cannot pay good wages, one cannot expect the best work. Certainly one cannot demand it. If a housekeeper gets a girl who is so ignorant of her business that she is willing to come for one-half as much money as a competent servant would demand, she may know that she will have to supplement her at all points. Therefore, if you can pay good wages, do so, and exact correspondingly good service; if not, do not complain that poor wages call forth only indifferent service.

But whatever you pay, remember that, after all, Dinah or Gretchen, Bridget or Hulda, is a human being, and treat her as such. Make it your business to see that her room is comfortable and pleasantly furnished, that she has her afternoon and evening off once in so often just as if she were in town, and that, when the work is unusually heavy, she has a "lift" from some member of the family. You may think that she has nowhere to go in the even-

ings, and therefore consider it unnecessary to set aside the customary one night a week. But the time is hers, to do with as she pleases. Even if she only wishes to go up to her room and sew, read, or go to bed, you should make it possible for her to do this. Your part of the contract demands that the time be given her; what she does with it is her affair only.

The maid's room must be well ventilated, and she must be reminded to keep it clean, if, as is probable, she shows a tendency to neglect it. Have an iron or white enameled bed, with good springs and mattress for the maid, and see that the blankets are warm enough in cold weather, and that she is as comfortable as you can make her. Avoid all kinds of "fussy" articles in this apartment, and yet make it attractive by its bright, clean aspect. The bureau may be of cheap material, painted white; have the floor varnished or stained in a light color, and lay a washable rug in front of the bureau, and a strip of carpet, bound at each end, in front of the bed. A good washstand for this room is one of the light iron affairs, with a ring for holding the bowl and pitcher, and

another smaller ring in which the soap-dish fits. A towel-rack screwed to the wall is above this. Have a special set of towels for this room, and a supply of wash-cloths. At the windows hang plain muslin curtains. Many servants take pride in making their rooms pretty, and if your maid shows a disposition to put pictures and photographs about her little retreat, encourage her to do so, and comment favorably on the result of her efforts.

To avoid future misunderstandings, settle definitely with a maid when you engage her what her duties are to be. Here lies the secret of smooth living later. If there are any drawbacks to the situation,—such as a lack of modern improvements in your home, tell her so at this time. State the number of persons in the family, whether you entertain a great deal, etc. If you attend to the care of the bedrooms each morning, leaving the sweeping of these apartments to the servants, inform her of this fact, making her comprehend that you do *not* include the sweeping in your share of the work. These may seem trifling matters now, but they are well worth mention-

ing if one would live at peace with one's maid. State what the privileges, and afternoons and evenings "out," are to be; also find out if she is a church-attendant, and if the denomination of the sacred edifice near your home is one that will suit her, and arrange as to the hour at which she shall attend service each Sunday.

Never engage a maid without a satisfactory reference. I am tempted to italicize that bit of advice. By a "satisfactory reference" I do not mean one that is written in a good hand, stating that the bearer lived in the writer's service and is honest, sober, etc. Such recommendations are often written by some friend of the bearer. If possible, have what is known as "a personal reference." This consists of a personal conversation with a former employer of the maid you would engage. When distance makes this impracticable, secure the address of such an employer, and write direct to her. If you are in doubt as to whether the address given is really that of an ex-mistress or of a friend of the applicant, take some means of ascertaining the truth,—by communicating with some trustworthy person in the town from

which the letter comes. Only one who has suffered from the results of taking a maid without a reference can appreciate how necessary such precautions are.

The routine of a general housework maid may be somewhat as follows: She must get up in the morning in time to have a good fire made in the range, so that breakfast may be served promptly at the hour set for it. In the homes where the first repast of the day is a simple one, the cereal may be cooked the day before, and warmed over for breakfast. This is usually preceded or accompanied by fruit, and followed by eggs and toast,—or hot breads,—and coffee. Such a meal takes very little time to prepare, and, unless it is served very early, the maid will have time before the family assemble at the table,—(perhaps while waiting for the kettle to boil or the biscuits to bake),—to brush out the hall and sweep off the veranda. If she wishes, the breakfast-table may be set overnight, and the corners of the cloth turned up over the dishes to protect them from dust.

When the family are assembled at the table, and the last course brought in from the kitchen,

the maid should be allowed to go upstairs to look after the bedrooms. If the housekeeper and her daughters make their own beds, the maid will only have to empty the slops, wash out the toilet-sets, and carry fresh water to the various bedrooms. As soon as this is done, she may descend to the dining-room, remove the breakfast, and, after reheating her own, eat it. In warm weather, when flies are prevalent, it is well for her to clear all the dishes from the dining-room, and darken it, as soon as she comes down-stairs. After she has her own breakfast she should wash the dishes, air, sweep and dust the dining-room, put the dishes away, and darken the room again. It is a kind thing for the housekeeper to urge the maid-of-all-work to take a cup of coffee before going up to the bed-rooms, or as soon as she has the kettle boiling, as some persons find it difficult to work with an empty stomach.

One cannot make general rules fit particular cases, as each housewife has her own ideas as to how the tasks for various days should be arranged. It is safe to assert, however, that in the well-regulated household the bedrooms,—

(including the maid's, which she must attend to herself),— should be in order, the downstairs rooms dusted, and dining-room and pantry work completed by half after ten or eleven o'clock. Where dinner is served at night, the noon-day meal need not be an elaborate one,— unless the housewife is willing to lend a hand in its preparation.

On Monday and Tuesday, if the maid does the laundry-work, the bedrooms may be attended to entirely by the members of the family, and, in many homes, the mother and daughters wash the dishes, and set the luncheon-table. This expedites that bugbear of the home,—the washing and ironing. On Monday and Tuesday one will, of course, be careful to have food that requires little time and labor. If desserts are to be made, they may be something that the house-mother can prepare quickly and easily so that she may not interfere with the laundry-work.

The worst part of this laundry-work is the washing, for one is dependent upon the weather to accomplish it promptly. It is different with the ironing, for when the clothes are once dried

it will do no harm if all cannot be ironed in one day, and some of them can be laid aside with safety until Wednesday. This day is reserved in many households for the "left-overs" of the ironing, and for the cleaning of the silver. Thursday is sometimes baking-day, sometimes cleaning-day, although Friday is the one day that is almost universally set aside for the sweeping of the various rooms. If one likes this plan I do not want to interfere with it, but my experience makes me think that it is better to have one or two rooms swept as one may find time for it during other days of the week, thus relieving Friday of some of its burden of work.

Teach a maid-of-all-work to wait on the dinner-table properly, but do not make it more difficult than necessary. The soup may be on the table when the family comes to dinner, and, while they are eating this, the maid may dish the meat and vegetables. She then removes the soup-plates and replaces these by warmed dinner-plates, after which she sets the meat in front of the carver and the vegetables on the side-table, to be passed by her after the meat is

served. Or, if preferred, the vegetables may be set on the table, one member of the family presiding at each of the dishes. This is the old-fashioned method, and simplifies matters when a maid is not proficient or rapid in waiting. This course finished, the maid removes the meat-dish, then the vegetables, last of all the plates, taking two of these at a time, instead of piling them on top of each other. Never allow the plates to be "scraped" or emptied into one another in the dining-room. The maid now takes all the articles from the table, except the glasses and napkin-rings, and brushes the crumbs from the cloth. For this purpose, have a tray or a plate and a small napkin,—never a brush. A dessert-plate is now put at each place, and the dessert brought in and passed, or set before the mother of the family, who serves it, handing each plate to the waitress who sets it in front of the person for whom it is intended, returning to her mistress with an empty plate. When the dessert has been eaten, the coffee, in small after-dinner cups, is served, after which the maid may go to the kitchen and get her own dinner.

When a servant once learns to do the waiting properly, it is no more difficult than it would be for her to serve things in a slapdash manner.

Of course at luncheon on washing and ironing days, the members of the family may wait on themselves.

The dusting of the parlors generally falls to some one of the daughters or to the mother, but the regular sweeping must be done by the servant once a week. On other days the carpet sweeper may be run over the rugs or carpets, and a soft brush used to brush out the corners and surfaces of hard-wood floors.

The appearance of the maid-of-all-work is to be considered, and she must always look neat. Even when cooking, a wash-dress, covered with a gingham apron, may be worn, and looks well, as it is the proper garb at such a time. But there must always be a large white apron at hand to slip on when the maid attends the door or goes to wait on the table. When her dinner is cooked, she may lay aside the gingham and don the white apron. Insist on this, and it soon becomes a habit. In the afternoon and evening, the maid may wear a black skirt

and waist of sateen, as this can be washed easily. Or, the skirt may be of wool, but should be black, with a washable black waist. The white aprons with bibs and straps are pretty and inexpensive. If a maid takes a proper pride in her appearance, she will bestow especial care on the washing and ironing of her own aprons. If she is untidy, I have no hope to offer to her mistress of ever altering her habits. I have had in my employ maids who were naturally neat, and who, under all circumstances, were tidy in appearance. Others were neat only when a special occasion, such as expected company, made them ashamed to be otherwise. When a servant appears, even in her kitchen, with a torn skirt, a soiled apron and a waist burst out under the arms, she is at heart slovenly, and the best that you can hope is that she will not appear at the door to admit guests until she has made herself presentable. But, when you are away from home, she probably will answer the door-bell exactly as she is.

If a maid does take some pride in her appearance, encourage her by remarking on her

trim and neat looks. Get her pretty aprons, and give her an occasional present of dainty collars and cuffs. I hope she will not want to wear lace-trimmed shirt-waists in waiting on the table! If she does, firmly but gently ask her to save her elaborate garments for her days out. If she has not the proper feeling with regard to her position she may resent this, —but you are in the right. Marcel waves, gigantic pompadours, laces and finery are as much out of place when the servant is at her duties, as your evening-gown would be when you are running your sewing-machine. The neat uniform worn by the self-respecting maid,—a wash-dress and white apron in the morning, and the black dress, white apron and cuffs in the afternoon,—is no more a "badge of inferiority" as some call it, than is the uniform worn by the trained nurse when on duty.

A just consideration for each other and a proper respect for themselves will make the relation of mistress and maid what it should be. When a maid resents your orders or gentle reproofs, or when you find her so wearing to your nerves that you complain about her to your

friends,—it is time for you and her to part. Many a servant has been kept too long. She becomes spoiled,—and it is the fault of the mistress who has let personal liking for and over-indulgence of a servant blind her to a sense of justice, and has made what should be a kindly business relationship a matter of feeling and favor. When this point is reached, it is too late to reform. Let the maid go, do not blame her but yourself, and, taking a lesson from the book of experience, try again, and beware of making a second mistake.

For, deny it as we may, a favorite maid is always an error. You may feel that she is worthy of consideration, but that does not mean that you are to let yourself become dependent upon her. Above all, do not judge her as you would one of your own class. It is unkind to her to do so. Her standards are different. What you would call a lack of consideration on her part, is but thoughtlessness; what you might consider disobedience, is but forgetfulness. Do her justice, credit her with having the best intentions, and always be kind. But do not let her gain such a hold on your feelings that

you are depressed if she sulks, and angry when she pouts. Do not reprove unless you know you should, then do it gently, and stand by the consequences. It is better to have your servant leave than for her to make you unhappy; it is better to do your own work, than to sacrifice your self-respect by truckling to your maid, and fearing to correct her when she does wrong. In this relation, as in many others, remember always, that "nothing"—no, not the best servant in the world,—"is worth the sacrifice of thy peace."

And, after all, it is not an affliction to lose one's maid. There are many worse things than doing one's own work,—especially when one can do it in one's own way. One of Mrs. Whitney's heroines congratulates herself on her ability to stir the custard she is cooking with a silver spoon, because there is no maid to be contaminated by the example, and "use a silver spoon to take up the ashes." Surely there is much in that thought, and a woman is never quite so much queen of her own house as when she is mistress of nobody but herself.

CHAPTER XV

HOUSE-CLEANING

THE very thought of house-cleaning fills the average man with dismay. One masculine declares that he will not go to see his sisters while the semi-annual war against dirt is raging. He insists that he steps into a pail of suds at the front door, and tumbles over brooms, sweepers and brushes in every room in the house. He feels, like Noah's dove of old, that he has not a dry place to set the sole of his foot.

There is no need of all this upheaval. Women too often make a burden to their families of their desire to have their houses clean. This is a laudable aspiration, but when carried too far does as much harm as would the arch-enemy to housewifery,—dirt. I know one home in which, during the dreadful week given up to "cleaning," there is not a room that is not turned inside-out. Meals are as plain and

scanty as compatible with sustaining existence, and in the whole domain there is not a quiet and comfortable corner in which one can crawl for rest. Rest! The very word causes indignation in the breast of the wife and mother. Does *she* get any rest? she demands, while the cleaning is in progress? Since she must be tired out, and since she must wear herself down scrubbing and sweeping and scouring,—why should not the remainder of the family have their share of the discomfort?

This is a selfish doctrine, and one that leads to rebellion on the part of husband and sons. In the first place, there is no reason for the general upheaval; and if there were reason for it, why should all of the household suffer for it?

No, to look at the matter calmly and sanely, the old-fashioned period of scrubbing, sweeping, scouring and—suffering—is unnecessary.

"But must we not clean our houses any more?" asks the particular housewife.

Certainly we must. Even if you have adopted the plan of which I have spoken often of "keeping clean rather than getting clean,"

there must once or twice each year be a time for going over the entire house and setting everything to rights. But do not attempt to do it all at once. Take one room at a time. A wife who had this habit was much amused at hearing her husband remark:

"Mother used to clean house every Spring and Fall. It was dreadful, and I hated it. But my wife never cleans house,—and we have been married for three years,—and yet our home is always neat. That shows that house-cleaning is not necessary," he added, triumphantly.

The blessed masculine did not know what had happened, because he had not seen it. But every Spring and Fall since he took unto himself a wife his house had been cleaned.

The secret of performing this disagreeable task with little disturbance is to do one room at a time. Do not determine to get it all done in one week, but take it leisurely, and quietly.

I would suggest that you begin on the top-floor,—that is, in the attic. This is a good time to attack the rubbish, and, as I have already suggested, to throw out the useless articles. Even if you have tried all the year

to keep nothing that is "trash" this *will* accumulate in spite of your efforts. Odds and ends of lawn and silk, left by the dressmaker when she was here, old newspapers, rolls of wrapping paper, etc., will be found. Sort all these out, and throw away that which you will never use. If you have a yard or two of silk left from your Spring gown, you will not need those triangular scraps of the material, none of them measuring more than two by three inches. Burn them without a qualm.

What shall be done with the newspapers is a question. One housewife keeps them all, tied together in bundles of a hundred or so, stacked in her attic. I used to smile at her thrift, but when I moved into town, and wanted papers for packing china and cooking utensils, the ridiculed bundles were a saving clause to one who lived far from packers and excelsior. There are many things besides packing for which the papers are useful. Laid in several thicknesses, they make excellent carpet-linings; folded smoothly, half-a-dozen layers of them form satisfactory stair-pads under the stair-carpet. When grease is spilt on the kitchen floor, a

mass of crumpled newspaper will absorb it quickly, and will make work with the floor-cloth easy. Where fires must be kindled frequently, one cannot afford to throw away the newspapers. So, if one has an abundance of room, follow the habit of the frugal housewife referred to, and tie the papers in bundles and stack away in the attic. In the chapter on the Garret I have already given advice as to cleaning this often-neglected apartment, so will say no more about it, except to repeat the warning already uttered,—*do not allow rubbish to accumulate there.*

Attack one bedroom at a time. If there are daughters in the family, each of them can do much of the cleaning of her own room. If you keep no servant I hope that you save time and strength by engaging a strong woman to come in and do the rough part of the work,—such as scrubbing the floors, washing the windows, shaking rugs, and taking up and putting down carpets. Fortunately, in this day, tacked-down carpets are not as universal as they used to be, but some homes still have them. If yours is one of these, have the carpet lifted, beaten, and

re-laid in one day, if possible. At all events, attend to one carpet before taking up another. While the floor-covering is hanging out on the line or is lying on the grass after a vigorous beating with stout switches, have the floor of the room well-scrubbed with water in which ammonia has been stirred. Open all the windows so that the wood will dry rapidly. When dry, inject insect powder into the cracks in the floor if you have reason to suspect moths in the room. Take down all pictures and wipe off the glasses with a damp cloth. After the side-walls and ceiling have been dusted, wash the base-board, and behind this spray gasoline, if you want to make sure of destroying all insects' eggs.

A little kerosene added to the water in which windows are washed will add to their brilliancy. If windows must be cleaned in freezing weather, a little alcohol stirred into the water will keep the moisture from solidifying on the panes. Old newspapers are excellent for giving the final polish to windows or mirrors. If chandeliers and gilt picture-frames have become fly-specked, wipe them with a cloth wrung

out in kerosene, then with a dry piece of flannel. As the furniture,—or most of it,—must be set out in the hall during the cleaning of the room, have all articles wiped off with a slightly dampened cloth, and upholstery and cushions brushed before returning them to their proper places. The woodwork of the doors and molding will, of course, be cleaned before the carpet is re-laid. Unless you have regular carpet-lining, cover the floor with newspapers, laid smoothly, and lay the carpet over these.

If the floor covering has become worn, it may be shifted about so that the worn bits will come under bureau or bed, or the breadths may be ripped apart and turned around. Still another device for making a worn carpet last longer is to lay a small rug or two over the thin or darned portions. Ingrain carpets may be turned when faded on the upper side, as the pattern on the under side is always as presentable as that on the upper. But, as carpets are such a nuisance, I would suggest that when those you have are absolutely past-worthy you put rugs in their places.

Take down the curtains from the various

windows, but do not have them hung again until all the rooms are cleaned, then, when the draperies have been freshly laundered, they may be re-hung throughout the entire house.

One of the dustiest bits of work connected with house-cleaning is the brushing off of books and bookshelves. It is well, therefore, to do this work first of all, before beginning to clean the other parts of the rooms.

In cleaning the lower rooms, have all the books carried out on the veranda to be dusted. This is somewhat of an effort, but where there are numbers of volumes, as I hope there are in your living-room or library, this plan prevents much breathing of irritating particles. The atmosphere of the room in which books are cleaned becomes dust-laden, and this dust settles thickly on polished furniture and floors long after you think that it has disappeared never to return. Wipe each volume carefully, after opening it, flirting the leaves, and slamming it shut several times.

The cleaning of the dining-room is a more lengthy piece of work,—unless the dishes have been wiped off frequently. Even then, plates

and glasses that are reserved for special occasions will need wiping or washing. If you keep a maid, they will undoubtedly need to be washed. The same may be said of the pans and pots in kitchen and pantry. Certainly the shelves must be scrubbed, and clean papers must replace those that are soiled. If, however, care has been exercised in the kitchen, so that each utensil, as soon as used, has been thoroughly cleansed, and put away dry, the housewife will not have a hard time in her semi-annual cleaning of the premises. But, unless this has been done, she will be appalled at the accumulation of dust and grease on her agate and tin-ware, and at the rust on her iron pots and pans. To remove the grease, pour into the encrusted utensil boiling water and add to this ammonia and washing-soda, then set at the side of the range to simmer for a few moments. This will loosen the particles of grease so that they may be removed readily. If pots are scorched and blackened on the bottom, try scraping the stain off with a bit of emery or pumice stone. If burned through, throw the pot away, unless it is of a ware that can be

mended by your local tinsmith. To remove rust from iron, soak the article in kerosene over-night, then wash and scrub in the usual way.

As we have said elsewhere, house-cleaning is a necessity, but in housekeeping as in the world of morals one reaps what one sows. If a housekeeper has kept a watchful eye on all departments of her *ménage,* has done her own work as well as she knows how, or has inspected regularly and systematically the work done by her hirelings, the semi-annual cleaning will be a simple thing compared with what it will be if she has "let well enough alone," has allowed dirt to accumulate, or walked by faith in her servants, rather than by sight for herself into the true condition of affairs.

CHAPTER XVI

"THE SOUL OF WEALTH"

ALTHOUGH we began our talks with the kitchen, it may, perhaps, be as well for us to wander back to it at the end of this little volume. For in this day of high prices what to cook in that kitchen is a problem to the housewife who would set before her family food that is palatable, nourishing and economical.

As I said before, it is the business of the housewife to make a study of this matter. What is pleasant to the taste is not, as some housekeepers seem to think, of necessity an extravagance; nor does the fact that a thing is not toothsome make it any more economical than are quail and mushrooms. Yet there are women who seem to think that anything which will "fill up" the stomachs of husband and children must be nourishing. The other day a woman told me of a soup which she said she gave to her hungry children when they hurried

home from school for the noon-day meal. "At this time of year," she explained, "vegetables are high, and meat-prices are dreadful. And yet the youngsters must be fed, so I give them what I call 'Mock Clam Broth.' "

"Clam broth is nourishing," I remarked.

"Yes, but this is not made of clams. I have it when we have had fish-cakes for breakfast. I save the water in which I boil the salt codfish, strain it, add to it enough milk to make it look white, then thicken it with flour, just as I would any cream soup. Then I sprinkle a little parsley over the top, and give it very hot to the children."

I checked the protest that rose to my lips. She certainly put something into the children's stomachs, but as to giving them nourishment,—she might just as well have given them crackers and water. And yet she prided herself upon having combined nourishment with economy!

Another woman says that while meat is so high she gives her family a pork pie. She makes "a light and rich pastry," boils salt pork, and after lining a deep pie-dish with the pastry fills it with the boiled pork, and bakes

it. If she would buy a flank steak, put it through her meat-grinder, and make it into meat-balls, then fry these in dripping to a good brown, (the interior remaining tender and juicy,) she would be more economical, and the result would be palatable and nourishing. Pie crust, when light and flakey, is expensive; when tough and cheap, it is not fit to eat.

Our farmer's wife needs to learn the potentialities of the stock-pot. It is one of the most valuable adjuncts to nourishing and cheap food. To start it, put into a large pot a marrow bone, well-cracked, a pound of lean coarse beef, cut small, a pound of coarse veal, chopped, a carrot, an onion, a turnip, and any other vegetables you can spare—one or two of each. Add two gallons of cold water, set at the side of the range and cover closely. Allow the water to simmer for at least six hours, season with salt and pepper, take from the fire, and turn into an earthenware pot,—unless the stock-pot itself is of granite or agate-ware. Set aside until very cold before taking the fat off the surface of the liquid, and straining out the vegetables. This liquid is the stock, and

many different kinds of soup can be made from it. Set it every day or two at the side of the fire, and add any bits of raw meat, or trimmings that you have, and boil up again. It is surprising how many nourishing bits that could not be used for other purposes can be put into this pot. A spoonful of a vegetable left in the dish after a meal, the trimmings from the roast that was cooked for dinner, the tough bit of steak left on the platter,—all add to the nourishing qualities of the stock, and all add as well to the flavor. Each time it is boiled after the addition of any fatty substance, it must be cooled and skimmed before using. In cold weather this liquid will keep for many days, and you may add to it the water in which rice was boiled, or the liquid from the various vegetables cooked—(except potatoes). When you want to make soup, take from the pot as much liquid as you need, and add a few vegetables, minced, or a cup of strained tomatoes and a tablespoonful of rice; or a cup of split pease, soaked for several hours, and boil until the soup reaches the stage at which you wish to serve it.

I have gone thus into details for the benefit

of our farmer's wife, for with her soup is often a rarity, or, when made, is a greasy, tasteless liquid. With a stock such as I have described, her broths will be nourishing and economical.

While on the subject of soups, I would like to call my reader's attention to the fact that when she has her own vegetables and all the milk from her own cow, she has opportunity to make what is always popular,—cream soups. Cream of celery, of corn, of lettuce, of tomatoes, of potatoes, of turnips, will cost her little and will nourish her family. Soups and broths are certainly economical, as there is so much nutriment in them when properly prepared that they make the eating of much meat after their consumption unnecessary, and blunt the keen edge of the men's and children's appetites. So have broths, *purées*, etc., instead of so much salt pork, and so much pastry.

I do not know why farmers should eat so much pie. It is not cheap, it is not digestible, and it does not make bone and muscle. Why not have in its place for desserts some of the good things that can be made of milk? When eggs are abundant there are the many kinds of

custards to be prepared, but even when eggs are too scarce to be used freely, one nearly always has pure milk, and with this one can prepare tender junkets of various flavors,—cornstarch and rice puddings, not to mention bread and cracker-crumb puddings.

As to meat, in too many country-homes pork in some form,—but especially salt pork,—is the staple. There is sometimes sufficient reason for this. One has one's own pigs, and when these are killed and salted down the meat will last all winter. But I have observed that even when the country-dweller has to buy his own salt pork, he still eats it. It is cheap, I grant, but it is less nourishing than beef. It would be better not to have meat quite so often, and to vary the species. There are excellent substitutes for meat,—if one has eggs and cheese. The housekeeper does not need to be reminded of the hundred and one different ways of cooking eggs, but she may not know of the toothsome dishes of which cheese is the basis, which, when served, will take the place of meat of any kind. Try laying slices of cheese on slices of crustless bread, putting them in layers in a

deep pudding-dish, then fill the dish with slightly salted milk into which two beaten eggs have been whipped, bake to a light brown *soufflé,* and serve immediately. I am not intending to give recipes, or cooking-directions, only suggesting one or two cheap and palatable and very satisfactory substitutes for salt pork and pies.

When one must economize, there are many odds and ends that can be saved which the average housewife thinks well-nigh useless. I have spoken of the stock-pot as the refuge for the odds and ends of bits of meat and vegetables,—which are too small to be cooked in any other way and too good to be thrown away. But there are other foods and many non-eatables which are worth saving.

One woman saves all her flour-sacks, washes them out, and sews them together for sheets to throw over the furniture when sweeping; another, sews small sugar-bags together for floor-cloths; a wise mother tries out and purifies her mutton-fat and pours it into small tins to cool, after beating into it a little camphor. When hardened, she turns it out and wraps it in

waxed paper to be used as camphor ice. It will cure chapping of the hands or lips in a single night, and is invaluable in the house where there are children. A young girl saves each tiny bit of toilet-soap that is too small to be used alone, puts all into a cheese-cloth bag, and uses this in her bath instead of soap. It makes a fine lather, and costs little or nothing, yet is composed of the best quality of fancy soap. A farmer's wife makes her iron holders of the legs of old stockings, tacked together and folded square. Many housewives have learned that there are ways to use stale bread-crumbs besides making them into bread-puddings,—good as these are. A pan containing all the odds and ends of bread and rolls and crackers may be set in the open oven until very dry, then put through the meat grinder, or rolled fine, and put away in a tin box to be used in "breading" articles for frying. Beef dripping, tried out, is often as good for frying certain things as butter would be,— and the left-over slice of fried bacon, if minced and added to some dish, will give it a delicious flavor that is not its own.

Bits of cheese too small to send to the table can be ground or grated, and put in a glass-jar to be used for cheese-puffs, macaroni, sauces, etc. A certain frugal housewife grinds her bits of cheese, puts the fine crumbs on thin crackers, sprinkles them lightly with salt and paprika, and sets them in the oven long enough to melt the cheese. When friends come to call in the afternoon they are served with five o'clock tea and these delicious cheese-crackers,—better than any that can be bought.

Tea-leaves should be squeezed dry and put into a tin can until one is ready to sweep, then sprinkled over rugs or carpets to lay the dust. Candle-ends may be used to kindle the fires, as, when they melt and run over the wood, they cause it to blaze briskly. In a home where there are hard-wood floors, the candle ends that are too small to use as lights are scraped very fine, and this wax is sprinkled over the polished floors, then rubbed in with a cloth bound firmly about the feet. In other words, the polisher "slides" or "skates" about the floor, thus rubbing in the wax with the flannel fastened over the soles of his shoes.

"But how trifling and small it is to bother about such little savings!" some woman may exclaim.

Is it? Is anything too small that adds to the welfare or comfort of any human being? Then, how much more important are the odds and ends that make for comfort in a household. The trifle you save to-day may not seem to make much difference, but, when every day adds another trifle saved, it adds also to the number of pennies saved by the end of the year, and the wife and mother owes such care to the husband whose money she must spend, and to the children whom that money must educate. Do not, then, hesitate to be very careful. Despise stinginess,—the meanness that makes one grudge what others use legitimately, what others eat and drink and wear. But economy is not stinginess. When all have been served abundantly from the table that you prepare for them, do not despise to "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

Waste is always vulgar; economy never is.

THE END

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